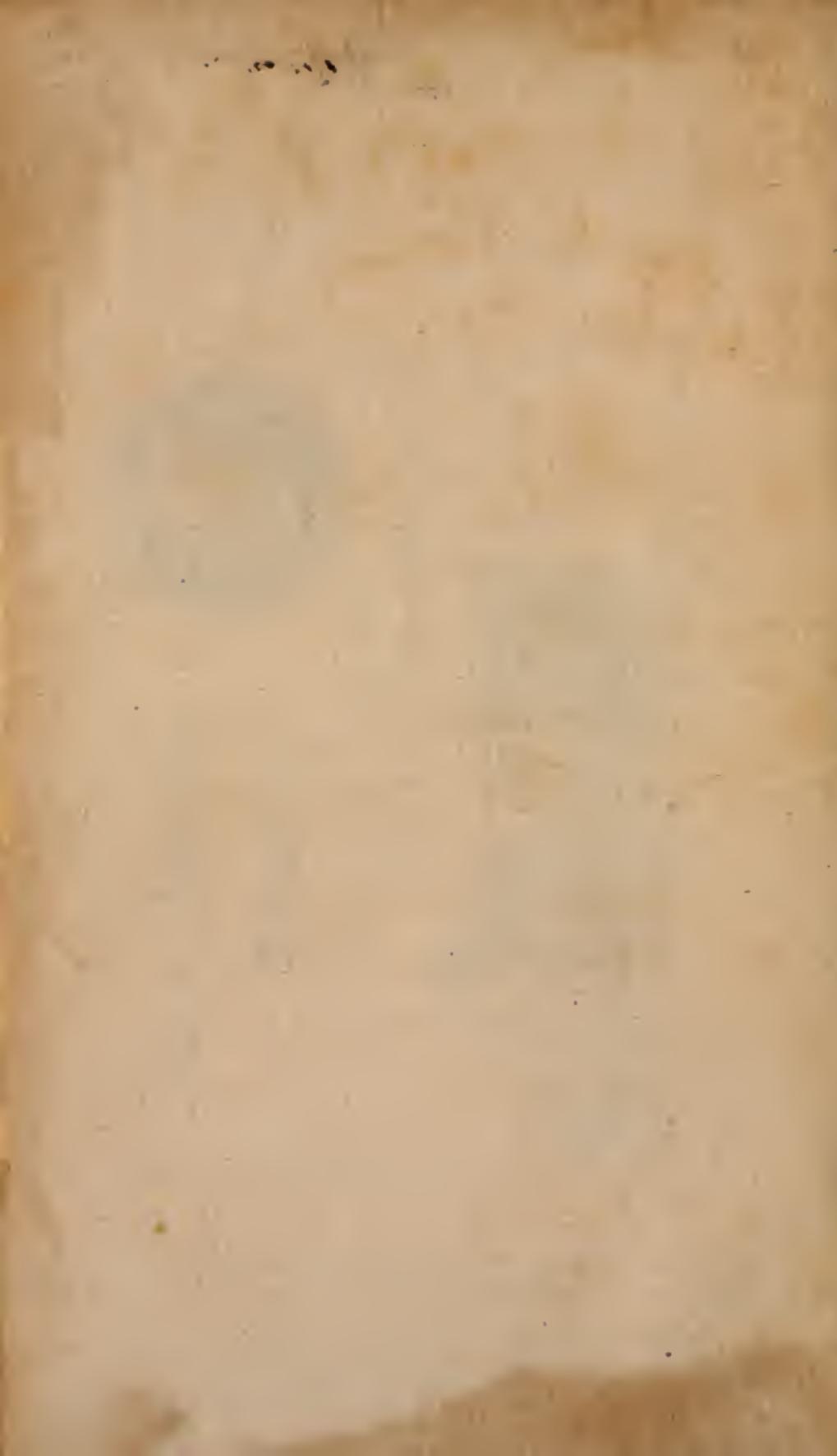


John Adams Library.

IN THE CUSTODY OF THE
BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY.



22



THE *John Adams*
HISTORY

OF THE

Knights Hospitallers

O F

St. JOHN of JERUSALEM,

Styled afterwards,

The KNIGHTS of Rhodes,

And at present,

The KNIGHTS of MALTA.

Translated from the FRENCH of

Mons. L'ABBE DE VERTOT.

VOLUME II.

E D I N B U R G H:

Printed by R. FLEMING,
For A. KINCAID and A. DONALDSON, YAIR and
FLEMING, and W. GRAY, Booksellers.

M.DCC.LVII.

*ADAMS 165.4

N^o. 2

T H E
H I S T O R Y
O F T H E
Knights Hospitallers

O F
St. JOHN of JERUSALEM,

Styled afterwards,

The K N I G H T S of Rhodes,

And at present,

The K N I G H T S of M A L T A.

B O O K IV.

THE knights hospitallers that had taken refuge in the isle of Cyprus, uncertain of their fate, destitute of houses to dwell in, and of any thing to subsist on, stripped of their all, and most of them very much wounded, looked upon themselves in that strange country as in a state of banishment : they all upbraided themselves for having outlived their brethren : hope itself, the last flattering comfort of the miserable, failed them, and death, which daily carried off some or other of the wounded, made advances too slow for their wishes.

JOHN DE
VILLIERS.
1291.

In this miserable situation, the grand master, to prevent the extinction of his order in the Levant, sent a

general summons to the hospitallers that were dispersed in most of the provinces of Christendom. Their orders were to come to Limisso, where the grand master had, by the same citation, called a general chapter, to consider, in this melancholy juncture, what measures the order should take with regard to its settlement.

SOON as these orders arrived in Europe, the knights were every where in motion. They all readily quitted their country, their commandries, or the houses of their relations ; no excuse was made for want of money or of health ; no body was mean enough to have recourse to pretexts so unworthy of their character. The old as well as young flocked to the sea side ; the ports were crowded with them, all striving with equal eagerness to find opportunities of embarking. Such as went off first thought themselves the happiest ; and, notwithstanding the distance of the places that they came from, they arrived soon one after another in the ports of Cyprus.

THE island of Cyprus, which we shall have frequent occasion to mention in this work, is one of the most considerable of the Asiatic isles, and situated in the Carpathian sea, in the further part of the Mediterranean, opposite to the coasts of Pamphilia and Cilicia, or Caramania, as it is now called. The gulph of Issus, called by the Italians Golfo di Lajazzo, washes it on the east, the Egyptian sea on the south, Pamphilia on the west, and this famous isle is hardly above forty leagues from Palestine, or the Holy Land.

IT was first governed by certain tyrants that assumed a sovereignty over it : then the kings of Egypt reduced it under their dominion : they were afterwards dispossessed by the Romans, the tyrants of well nigh all the known world ; and the Greeks, at last, succeeded to the Romans. The isle of Cyprus made part of the empire of Constantinople : it was taken by the Mahometan Arabians, in the reign of the caliph Osman, and the empire of Heraclius, but the Greeks afterwards recovered it. Richard Cœur de Lion, king of England, in his

his passage to the Holy Land, conquered it, driving out Isaac Comnenus, who being the governor, had set himself up for sovereign of the island ; and, it may be remembered, what we already observed, that the English monarch sold it immediately to the templars, which order was then as rich and powerful as many sovereigns ; but that the differences between the Greek and Latin churches occasioning continual seditions, they had given up their right to Guy de Lusignan.

"It is necessary to observe further^a, that this crown fell by succession to Amaury his brother, who left it to his son Hugh I. father of Henry I. his successor. He was father to Hugh II. who died young, and without issue ; another Hugh, his cousin german, descended from the brave Normans, that drove the Saracens out of Calabria, Apulia and Sicily, and 1604. whose father had married Henry's sister, succeeded him in the throne, and, to make himself more agreeable to the Cypriots^b, took the surname of Lusignan. John his son inherited the crown after him, and left it to Henry II. who gave the hospitallers and templars this reception in his island.

SUCH was the state of the isle of Cyprus, when the summons sent by the grand master to all parts of Christendom, spread every where the news of the taking of St. John d'Acre by the infidels, the entire expulsion of the Christians out of Palestine, and the almost irreparable losses sustained by the hospitallers and templars in the defence of that place.

POPE Nicholas IV. was then on the throne of St. Peter. This pontiff, at the melancholy news, seemed in a terrible consternation, and dispatched expresses into all parts to give advice of it to the Christian princes. By his order, and with their consent, several provincial councils were held, to consider of the most ready and effectual means to recover the Holy Land, and every

^a L'Hist. des Royaumes de Jerusalem, Cypre & Armenie par le P. Estienne de Lusignan.

^b Affises & bons usages du Royaume de Jerusalem par Jean Ebelin, Comte de Jaffa & d'Ascalon.

metropolitan sent him afterwards the result of their debates in these assemblies.

IT appears from the accounts and journals of these councils, that the sum of their opinions generally was to desire the pope to use his good offices with the princes of Christendom * that were at war with one another, to persuade them to end their differences by a solid and lasting peace, or at least by a long truce, that they might be in a condition to unite their forces, and turn their arms in concert against the infidels. They observed particularly to the pontiff, that he ought to apply to Philip the fair, who was then upon the throne of France, and the most potent monarch in Christendom, and exhort him to put himself at the head of so holy an enterprise ; and that it would be proper at the same time to renew the prohibitions of the councilis of Lateran and Lyons against supplying the infidels with arms ^b. In fine, as experience furnished abundant grounds of apprehension, that the old antipathy might again break out between the hospitallers and templiers, they proposed to the pope to unite those two military orders ^c, to make them but one body, and put them under the same head ; and that for preventing the cabals and intrigues that are but too common in elections, the grand master should not be chosen by the votes of the knights, but, in case of a vacaney, the pope and his successors should have the sole right of naming that superior.

PURSUANT to these several proposals, the pope dispatched away legates and nuncios to most of the western princes, to engage them to put a speedy end to their particular wars, and remove that obstacle to a general crusade. He did not fail to have it represented in particular to Philip the Fair, that the other sovereigns of Europe had their eyes fixed upon him, in order to make his conduct the rule of their own ; and that if he put on the cross, he might be assured that those princes
by

* Concil. gen. t. 11. p. 1361. ^b Ruinaldi ad ann. 1291,
num. 22. ^c Idem. ibid. num. 29 & 30.

by his example, would do the same ; and, besides the merit of so pious an enterprise, he would have the glory of appearing like a king of kings, and at the head of most of the monarchs of Christendom.

BUT Philip, a prince of solid judgment, was not easily caught with such flatteries, being well satisfied, that his first duty was to take care of the government of his own kingdom. The pope, not receiving an answer suitable to his expectations, wrote back to him, that if the affairs of his kingdom necessarily detained him in Europe, the least he could do, in order to defray the expence of the expedition, was to pay the money which Philip III. his father had levied upon the clergy of his dominions, under pretence of a like crusade, which design notwithstanding was never put in execution. The silence of historians, with regard to this second letter, shews plainly enough that it had no success.

THE pope's application was not confined to princes in communion with the church of Rome. As in this project of a new league, the design was to recover the holy places, which were equally reverenced by all Christians, whether Greek or Latin, and as well of the former as the latter communion ^a, he wrote upon that occasion to Andronicus Paleologus, emperor of Constantinople, to John Comnenus, emperor of Trebizonde, and to the kings of Armenia, Iberia and Georgia, though all of them schismatics, and observers of the Greek rites.

THE pope, to raise up new enemies against the Sarazens, carried his views as far as the remotest part of Persia ; and hearing, that a Tartar descended from Genchiczan, called Argon, though a Pagan and an idolater, had yet no aversion to the Christians, he sent two Franciscan friars on an embassy to him ^b, to use their endeavours as well for his conversion, as to engage him to fall upon that part of Syria, which adjoins to

^a Du Cange famil. Byzant. p. 192.

^b Vading. n. 4. and 5. Hailton seigneur de Charchi, c. 45.

Perisia, whilst the Christians attacked Palestine^a. But the two friars found that prince was dead the year before.

THUS ended all the endeavours of this pope, who, during the siege of St. John d'Acre, would never contribute any thing out of his own treasure for the relief of the besieged. The measures that he took afterwards, and his many embassies, which made a great noise, but had little solidity or significancy in them, were all likewise disconcerted by his death; and the difficulty of uniting so many princes of different religions, or of opposite interests, occasioned the project of a crusade to miscarry under his successor. There was not a prince that engaged in it, and all the western Christians continued in a lamentable indifference for the recovery of the Holy Land. The hospitallers alone had different sentiments, and, in obedience to the grand master's order, had already repaired to Limisso in the isle of Cyprus.

THE grand master soon after called a general chapter. Never since the foundation of the order was there seen an assembly composed of such a number of knights of different countries; the whole order in a manner had transported itself to Cyprus. The grand master appeared in the assembly with a countenance melancholy indeed, but still carrying in it that air of grandeur which virtue gives, and the greatest calamities cannot deject: and, directing his discourse particularly to the knights newly arrived from the west, "Your diligence, says he to them, in observing our orders, "and the courage that seems to animate you, convince "me, in spite of all our losses, that there are still true "hospitallers in the world capable of repairing them. "Jerusalem, my dear brethren, is fallen; fallen, as "you know, under the tyranny of infidels. A barbarous but formidable power has forced us by degrees "to abandon the Holy Land. For more than an age "past we have been obliged to fight as many battles "as we have defended places. St. John d'Acre is a "late witness of our last efforts, and almost all our
"knights

"knights lie buried in its ruins. 'Tis for you to supply their places ; 'tis from your valour that we expect our return into the Holy Land, and you carry in your hands the lives, the fortunes, and the liberty of your brethren, not of the order only, but of the vast number of Christians that are now groaning under the chains of the infidels."

THE senior commanders made answer, in the assembly's name, to this moving discourse, by a generous declaration, that they would sacrifice their lives to deliver the Holy Land from the tyranny of the barbarians; whilst, from the eyes of the younger knights, there streamed down floods of tears, warm, as the impatience which inflamed that gallant body of youth, to take vengeance on the Sarazens. But as it was necessary, before they entered on a war, to regulate the form of their new settlement, the first point under consideration was to fix a place for the residence of the order.

THE king of Cyprus had assigned them Limisso, an antient city, dignified with an episcopal see, and situated on the south coast of the island : but the Arabian and Sarazen corsairs had demolished it before that time. It was then a large open town, without any defence but a castle in the middle of it, which was tolerably well fortified, and provided to oppose the landing and descents of the corsairs. Some knights, that thought themselves too much straitned in this place, proposed to retire to some port of Italy ; but the grand master, and principal persons of the order, rejected the motion with indignation : they represented, that their obligations, and the very design of their institution, did not allow them to remove out of the neighbourhood of the Holy Land, and that they ought always to be within reach of improving such opportunities as might offer for the making a new attempt there. This sentiment was received with general applause, and it was made a sort of standing rule and statute of the order for ever. Though the town did not afford lodgings for all the knights, yet the grand master's first care was to provide apart-

apartments for the poor and pilgrims ; and in a very short time after, they resumed all the functions of hospitality. With regard to the knights and military friars, it was resolved to fit out immediately the ships of the order, which had served to transport the knights from Palestine or Europe to the isle of Cyprus, and to make use of them for convoying pilgrims, who, notwithstanding the loss of Jerusalem, continued still to visit the holy places, as they were used to do before the first crusade, paying the infidels the ordinary tribute, which they demanded at the gates of the city.

In a short time they had fitted out, in several ports of the island, a considerable number of small vessels of different bulk, which, putting to sea in the usual seasons, i. e. at the latter end of March and August, coasted along Europe, to take up pilgrims ; and, out of the same charitable disposition, brought them back again into their own country. Some infidel corsairs, which used to make a common prey of the pilgrims, fell upon these first vessels of the order, but found in those that manned them, a valour and opposition they had never experienced before. Several of these rovers were taken by the hospitallers, who frequently returned to Cyprus with considerable prizes, particularly of the ships belonging to the soldan of Egypt, their declared enemy. These prizes insensibly augmented the number of vessels they put to sea. They built several gallies afterwards, and some ships, so that in a little time considerable squadrons set sail from the ports of Cyprus, and the flag of St. John at last commanded respect all over the Mediterranean.

SUCH was the beginning of the naval armaments of the order of St. John of Jerusalem. The loss of Acre, and their being driven to a retreat in the isle of Cyprus, forced the hospitallers, for the exercise of their courage, to take to the sea ; and perhaps the great successes they have since had for the space of four hundred years, and the infinite number of Christians which they have either saved or delivered from an horrid slavery, may be thought to have made the order abundant amends

for

for the loss of such a number of knights as fell in the defence of St. John d'Acre.

MELEC-SERAPH, the soldan that had reduced Egypt, incensed at the prizes which the hospitallers took from his subjects, and at seeing an order revive as it were, which he thought he had entirely destroyed, resolved to pursue the remains of it, and drive them from the isle of Cyprus. He fitted out a great fleet, with land-forces on board ; but civil wars breaking out in his own dominions, he was necessarily detained there, and the death of that prince, who was killed in a battle that he lost against the rebels, delivered the hospitallers and templars from the danger of a siege, in a place that was open on all sides, and, excepting the castle, had no other fortification but the bravery of those knights.

THE grand master, to prevent the like design from Melec-Nazer, successor to Seraph, desired leave of the king of Cyprus to fortify Limisso, and obtained it easily from a prince who could part with any thing but his money ; and the hospitallers laid out what they had in raising some bastions of earth towards the sea. The grand master applied himself afterwards to restore the original discipline, which, by the continual exercise of arms, by a series of engagements, by cruisings and plunder, had been very much weakened and impaired.

MOST of the knights, growing rich by the prizes which they took from the infidels, instead of paying in the produce, as they ought, to the treasury of the order, appropriated it to themselves, and spent it generally in luxury. Finding rich stuffs among their prizes, they began to dress themselves beyond what was suitable to the character of religious. The delicacy of their tables was equal to the richness of their cloaths. The expence they were at in horses answered to their other extravagance, and the dangerous air of an island, which blind paganism had consecrated to Venus, made unhappy impressions on the youth of the order; nay it was soon notorious, that several hospitallers had run in debt

to support so scandalous an expence. Meantime, another abuse prevailed in the provinces on this side the sea; the priors, during the last wars of the Holy Land, having usurped the prerogative of giving the habit and crois of the order to novices, without making due enquiries into their birth, or sufficiently examining whether they were truly called to it; a practice, which would soon have brought this illustrious order into contempt.

To reform these abuses, two general chapters were held. In the first an order was made, that no

1292. military hospitaller should have more than three

great horses for himself, or ride with gold or silver furniture; and, by another statute, the priors were expressly forbid to admit any novice, without a commission from the grand master. But an exception was made with regard to the bailiages of Spain, where the order would have been soon destroyed, if, to supply the continual losses they sustained against the Moors of Granada, they could not have received a new knight till a brevet or commission came from the grand master, whose ordinary residence was in so remote a country, and who might frequently be at sea, or engaged in some enterprize against the infidels.

TWAS in the second general chapter that they made a regulation, which appeared very necessary

1293. with regard to the private debts that the knights left at their death.

It was ordered, that they should be discharged out of the sale of their equipage, and if that was not sufficient to pay the whole, the residue should be raised out of the fund which every knight assigned for the service of the order, either at his admission into it, or out of such particular donations as were made him afterwards, the use of which he enjoyed for his life; regulations, all of which suppose the abuses we have now been speaking of, and which they designed to redress by these new statutes.

THIS relaxation in the regular discipline arose partly from the state of the universal church at that time. It had, for above two years before, been without a visible head. The sovereign pontiffs had always kept a vigilant

vigilant eye upon the conduct of the hospitallers. During the vacancy of the holy see, no notice could be taken of the abuses which riches introduced into the order. At length the cardinals, who, for twenty-seven months together, through an obstinacy not very edifying, could not agree in the choice of a pope, determined at last in favour of a recluse, called Peter de Mourhon,^a highly esteemed for his eminent piety, and who afterwards founded a particular congregation of monks, known by the name of Celestines. The cardinals sent him the instrument of his election by Bernault de Gout, archbishop of Lyons, accompanied with four other deputies, Cardinal Peter Colonna going likeways of his own voluntary motion along with them. These deputies found the holy monk shut up in a little cell, built on the top of a mountain, near the city of Sulmo, in the kingdom of Naples. There was in it a small window with bars before it, from which he talked to all that, drawn by the fame of his virtues, came to consult him about the surest way of attaining to Christian perfection. These deputies of the conclave saw through the grate a venerable old man, about seventy-two years old, pale and wan, emaciated by a constant course of austeries, his hair staring, his beard long and uncouth, and his eyes swollen with the tears that he shed continually in his prayers. The archbishop of Lyons, presenting him the instrument of his election, told him, that he was chosen unanimously in the conclave to be head of the church, and conjured him, in the name of God, to submit to his vocation, and give his assent readily to a choice so necessary for Christianity, since the long vacancy of the holy see. The holy man prostrated himself on the ground, and, after continuing a considerable time in prayer, he rose up, and, fearing to oppose the will of God, consented to his election, and was afterwards consecrated at Aquila, a town of Abruzzo, by the name of Celestine V.

THE

* Bolland. tom. 15. p. 426 & 427.

THE new pope, as soon as he was seated in the chair of St. Peter, gave the order of St. John proofs of his vigilancy in regard to their conduct and demeanour. He exhorted them in the warmest, and withal in the most moving terms, to reflect upon the religious profession they had embraced, and the solemn vows they had made at the altar; and, to supply them with temporal succours, as well as spiritual, the holy pontiff, considering that those knights, in defending the Holy Land, had lost all the effects and possessions that their order enjoyed there, sent a bull to the grand master by which, in consideration of those losses and their services, he exempts them for the future from paying their share of certain contributions, which the popes, the college of cardinals, and the legates especially, exacted all over the district of their legatine authority, in a manner entirely arbitrary, and oftentimes at the expence of the ornaments and sacred vessels of the church.

THIS was not the only abuse that the holy pope had a mind to reform; but he found so many obstacles in his way, and was moreover so sensible of his own little capacity for government, that he readily gave ear to the suggestions of some cardinals, who, taking advantage of the tenderness of his conscience, exaggerated to him the obligations and dangers of the papal dignity, in hopes of succeeding him in it.

IT is even said, that cardinal Cajetan, who aspired to the popedom, spared neither artifices nor impostures to persuade the holy man to abdicate his dignity, and that he suborned a rascal to counterfeit an angel of light, and order him, in the name of God, and under pain of damnation, to return to his cell.

CELESTINE, who was a weak man, took the voice of an impostor for that of heaven, and besides, he chose rather to return to the private condition of a monk, than continue any longer in a dignity, where he was not allowed to do the good he wished, and hinder the evil he could not bear. In fine, whether it was inspiration, or distaste for a court where politicks then got the better of the maxims of the gospel, he proposed himself

himself, and made his own abdication * in a full consistory, with a magnanimity, of which there had never been an instance before, nor perhaps will be hereafter. Cardinal Cajetan, who had taken all possible measures to facilitate the acceptance of his resignation, reaped the fruits of it in the next conclave, and, by the help of his cabal, was raised to the height of his wishes, and invested with that eminent dignity. He took the name of Boniface VIII. He was learned in the civil and canon law, an excellent 1294. politician, and a consummate statesman, but of an unmeasurable ambition, covetous, revengeful and cruel; and, during all the time of his pontificate, was wholly taken up with the chimerical project of uniting the temporal and spiritual swords, and employing the authority he was invested with, which was purely spiritual, to acquire, under one pretext or other, a temporal dominion over the territories of all Christian princes; such was his ambition, a passion to which his predecessor fell the first sacrifice.

CELESTINE, by his abdication, becoming again brother Peter de Mourhon, flattered himself that he had shaken off all fetters, and recovered his liberty. The good man was for making no other use of it, but to chuse a desart where he might pass the rest of his days a stranger to all the world; but Boniface, for fear some new scruple should make him revoke his resignation, ordered him to be apprehended, and, to discover the most secret dispositions of his prisoner, obliged him to come to confession to himself. The pious recluse's declarations, though made with the utmost sincerity,

VOL. II.

B

were

* Ego Celestinus papa quintus, motus ex legitimis causis, id est, causâ humilitatis, melioris vitæ & conscientiæ illæsæ, debilitate corporis, defectu scientiæ, & malignitate populi, & infirmitate personæ; & ut præteritæ consolationis vitæ possim reparare quietem, spontè ac liberè cedo papatui, & expressè renuntio loco & dignitati, oneri & honori; dans plenam & liberam facultatem ex nunc satro cœtui cardinalium eligendi & providendi duntaxat canonice universali ecclesiæ de pastore. Boſo, t. 2. l. 1. p. 7. Rinald. num. 23.

were not sufficient to remove his fears ; and it is reported, that, to rid himself entirely of this uneasiness, he got him dispatched by ill usage. He shut him up like a criminal in a hideous dungeon, and so very narrow, that there was not room enough to put a sorry bed into it. The barbarous jailors that watched him narrowly, as soon as ever he had closed his eyes to take a little rest, interrupted his sleep, and, by this barbarous device, soon put an end to the poor remainder of his life. The pope, by this inhuman conduct, made himself odious to all good men. There was a sort of prophecy about that time current in the world, in which Celestine, speaking of his successor, and the tricks he had used to arrive at the papacy, is made to say, “ Thou art got upon the throne of St. Peter like a fox ; thou shalt reign like a lion, and die like a dog.” But it is very probable, that this prophecy, like abundance of others, was not invented till after the events happened.

HOWEVER this be, Boniface, who fancied himself as much a successor of the Cæsars as of St. Peter, was no sooner seated in his pontifical chair, than he professed a particular affection for the hospitallers and templars. He knew very well, that these two bodies were composed, at least in the main, of gentlemen and brave warriors, and he omitted neither an open and avowed protection, nor favours, nor benefits, to engage them in a stricter adherence to the holy see, and his particular interests.

THE hospitallers of St. John were the first that experienced the effects of his protection. The kings of England and Portugal, after the loss of the Holy Land, pretended that the hospitallers, who had commandries in their territories, had no right to send the revenues thereof abroad, and remit them to the Levant, pretensions of a dangerous example, and which might have terrible consequences, by their influence on other monarchs of Christendom.

THE two kings we are speaking of went so far as to stop this money, and sequestrate it ; and, to justify their

their conduct, they gave out, that the commandries of the order, being founded in their dominions by the kings their predecessors, or else by their subjects, only for the defence of the Holy Land, they could not, since the loss thereof, and the conquests of the infidels, make a better use of the revenues of those great benefices, than by employing them for maintaining the poor of each nation, instead of sending the money to the isle of Cyprus, where it served only to support the luxury, and feed the pleasures of the knights of St. John.

THESE reproaches were not perhaps altogether groundless with regard to several particular commanders; but they made no impression at all upon Boniface. That pontiff, who knew no way of treating with crowned heads, but that of haughtiness, threatened the two princes immediately with the thunders of the church, if they did not revoke their orders. He represented to the king, that the hospitallers had fixed their residence in the isle of Cyprus, not so much for a place of refuge and retreat, as to be within reach whenever an opportunity offered of renewing the war, and recovering the Holy Land; that they discharged the obligations of their profession as much in that isle as in Palestine; that they had there an hospital open to all the poor, and kept ships in their ports, to serve for the convoy and security of pilgrims; and that this military order, from which the church received such services, being under the particular protection of the popes, he was necessarily obliged to make use of his authority, which he derived from God alone, against the usurpers of revenues, dedicated to the defence of Christianity. The menaces of this pontiff proved more effectual than his reasons, and brought the two kings to a compliance; their orders were revoked, and the sequestration taken off.

THE pope treated Henry de Lusignan, king of Cyprus in a manner still more haughty. That prince, as has been observed, had given the hospitallers and templars a retreat in his island; but fearing they might make themselves as powerful there as they had been in Palestine, he issued out a solemn edict, forbidding them

to purchase any estates there ; and the pope, in compliance with that monarch, had confirmed this edict by particular bulls. The king of Cyprus had laid upon them a sort of general poll tax, in which the clergy of this kingdom, and the body of nobility and gentry were comprehended, as well as the common people. The pope was soon informed of it; and, as the least pretence imaginable was enough to put that pontiff upon stretching his authority, he did not fail to exert himself upon this occasion. He called this tax a downright invasion of the privileges that the holy see had been pleased to grant to the military orders, and he wrote to the king of Cyprus, like a sovereign to his subject, in the most arrogant and imperious terms.

" WE will, says he, and ordain, that the impost,
" vulgarly called the poll-tax, the very name of which
" is horrible and detestable, be absolutely abolished,
" and that the king shall not impose it on his own sub-
" jects, without the permission of the holy see ; and,
" with regard to other taxes and payments, we like-
" ways declare the knights hospitallers and templars
" absolutely exempted from them." The pope added
in his letter, that though the holy see had by a bull
confirmed the edict, which prohibited those military
friars from making any purchases, yet the king ought
not to take that concession of the holy see in a rigorous
sense, so as to hinder the knights from enlarging the
enclosures about their convents, and purchasing such
houses as adjoined to their principal house, and were
necessary for the lodging of a great order, which, be-
sides the pilgrims and the poor, always maintained a
body of troops to man their vessels.

THE king of Cyprus, finding himself wounded by the imperious pontiff's letters, in a part the most sensible of any to princes, and in his sovereign authority, omitted nothing to make the knights feel the whole weight of his resentment. He declared publicly, that he would not suffer a set of men in the heart of his kingdoms, that pretended to be independant of all other authority but that of the pope's. His ministers there-

thereupon, in contempt of the pontiff's prohibition, compelled the knights to pay their poll-money ; and this covetous prince exacted the same tribute of the clergy. The nobility and gentry were not exempted from it ; and the people, who generally pay more than the other orders of the state, and always first, were still worse treated.

THIS prince, by his greediness, raised a general discontent. The templars, who were naturally proud and haughty, and by the necessities of the kings of Jerusalem, who stood in need of their succour, had acquired a sort of independence, being incensed against Henry, fomented the national discontent, which broke out at last into an open revolt. Amaury, titular prince of Tyre, and brother to the king, was underhand the encourager of it. This ambitious prince aspired to the crown ; and when, by himself and his emissaries, he had made sure of the troops and the inhabitants of the capital, he took off the mask, put himself at the head of the rebels, seized on the king's person ; and, to remove him out of the sight of the people, who are very susceptible of compassion, and naturally inconstant, he sent him to Haiton, king of Armenia, whose sister he had married ; and Haiton confined the unfortunate prince in a castle, situated among the mountains bordering on Cilicia. Amaury, after this, got the king his brother declared incapable of the government, and was preparing to take the crown, when a valet de chambre of the deposed king, called Simonet, who always continued faithful to his first master, though he had entered into the usurper's service, making use of the liberty he was allowed of a free access to his apartment, stabbed him in his bed, occasioning thereby a new revolution, in which king Henry recovered both his liberty and crown. The grand master did not engage on any side in all these commotions, and died a little after the king of Cyprus's return into his dominions.

THE hospitallers chose in his stead ODO DE PINS.
Odo de Pins, of the language of Provence, descended from an illustrious and noble family

in Catalonia,* from which likeways the house of Pins in Languedoc, who bear the same arms, pretend to derive their original. Odo de Pins was a knight far advanced in years, exceeding pious, and allowed to be an exact observer of the regular discipline. While he was only a private man, all his brother knights thought him worthy of the grand mastership; but scarce was he arrived at that eminent dignity, but they found he wanted many of the qualifications proper for government, especially in an order, the duties whereof related as much to the exercise of arms, as to prayer and works of charity. He imagined he had discharged all the obligations incumbent upon him, when he had spent whole days in the oratory. Perhaps he might be more devout than was proper in his post; and perhaps too, his knights were less so than their character required. However that be, his excessive fondness for devotion and retirement occasioned, in some measure, a neglect of all kinds of military enterprizes.

THE knights, who, since the loss of their possessions in Palestine, had scarce any subsistence but what they got by cruising, murmured openly at his indifference for any naval preparations. They joined in a body to lay their complaints before the pope, desiring his permission to depose him. Boniface summoned him to Rome, to hear his defence on the subject of the grievances of his knights. Odo, who was better cut out to obey than command, set forward immediately, but died before he could reach the capital of the Christian world. The hospitallers, upon the

WILLIAM DE VILLARET. news of it, chose for his successor
1262. brother William de Villaret, of the language of Provence, great prior of St. Giles, and then residing at his priory. This gentleman had a brother that was also a knight at that time, and one of the most distinguished of

* Libro 1. de la coronica de la religion de St. Juan. p. 127.
Per. Fray. Dom. Juan. Augustin de Funes en Valencia 1626.

♦ Cosmog. de Belleforest. t. 2. p. 1116.

of the order ; and the monastery of the nuns of St. John at Fieux in Querci, was governed by Jourdaine de Villaret their sister.

THOUGH the new grand master had received an account of his election, he was in no great haste to set out for the isle of Cyprus, but was resolved first to visit in person all the priories of the 1298. languages of Provence, Auvergne and France ; and, by cares so becoming his post, he restored the regular discipline to its purity, confirming it afterwards by a chapter, which he called in the commandry of la Tronquiere, a member depending on the great priory of St. Giles. He made several very useful regulations there; and 'twas in this chapter that he put the nunneries of Beaulieu, Martel, and Fieux, which belonged to the lady nuns of the order, under the visitation of the great prior of St. Giles and his successors. The lady superior of Beaulieu is elective and perpetual, takes the title of grand prioress, and wears the great cross.

THE house of Belver or Beaulieu was originally only an hospital, founded by the lords of the house of Themines, about A. D. 1220, between Figeac and Rocamadour, for the relief of the poor and pilgrims, which came that way in their passage to the Holy Land. In 1259, a lord of Themines, called Gilbert, and Aigline his wife, gave this house to the order of St. John of Jerusalem, with all the possessions annexed to it^a. This donation was accepted in the name of the order, by brother Peter Gerard, commander of the houses of Quercy, and brother Gerald de Baras, great commander of the houses on the sea-side, as the deed of gift expresses his title, which must evidently be understood of the first dignity of the order, (excepting that of the grand mastership) and such as was annexed to the

^a THE antient family of Themines passed successively into those of Cardaillac and de Penne, and afterwards into that of Laufiere, from whence, about the end of the sixteenth century, sprung Pons de Laufiere Themines, knight of the order of St. Michael and the Holy Ghost, marshal of France, seneschal and governor of the province of Quercy.

the language of Provence preferably to all others. 'Twas in this chapter of la Tronquiere that William de Villaret, then grand master, gave the habit and cross of the order to several young ladies of quality, who had devoted themselves in that hospital to the service of the poor, and appointed Aigline de Themines, the founder's daughter, for the prioress. The grand master made this house subject to the visitation of the great prior of St. Giles, and established several other regulations, which Aigline, and four other ladies, deputed by the convent, and present at la Tronquiere, submitted to being afterwards ratified in a particular meeting of their chapter.

WE cannot discover the time of the foundation of the house of Martel, situate in the city of that name, and which for a long time was called the hospital of the true cross. As for another house of the order called Fieux, Jourdaine de Villaret, sister to the grand master and Fulk de Villaret knight of the order, was the first prioress of it, as may be seen in the catalogue of the superiors of that house. But as it has been since united to that of Beaulieu, we shall say nothing farther about it; only observing, that in these three houses, as well as in that of Tholouse, which is of a modern foundation, and in all others of the order, in what country soever they are situate, the nuns are obliged to be of noble birth, and the same proofs are required of them as for the knights.

THEIR habit is a robe of red cloth, with a mantle of black cloth, upon which they wear a cross of white linen with eight points, a practice which has varied in different provinces, and in different ages, the causes of which we shall relate in the course of this history*.

AT the latter end of this century, and during the mastership of William de Villaret, pope Boniface VIII. considering the loss which this military order had suffered of all their possessions in Palestine, to enable them the better to carry on the armaments they had set on foot,

* In. arch. vatic. ex regist. Bon. VIII. t. 2. fol. 308.

foot, annexed the famous abbey of the holy trinity of Venusia, in the kingdom of Naples, to the manse of the grand master. The pope, by his bull of the third year of his pontificate, declares, that he was induced to suppress the monks of that convent, on account of the irregularity of their manners; and that for a contrary reason, he had thought fit to confer it upon the hospitallers, who daily exposed their own lives to defend those of pilgrims, and guard them in their passage to the Holy Land. 'Twas almost at the same time, and out of a like motive, that Henry, marquis of Hochberg, of the house of Baden, before he entered into the order of the templars, gave the hospitallers his lordship of Heitersheim, near Friburg, the residence of the great priors of Germany. This grant was confirmed twenty years after by Henry and Rodolph, marquises of Hochberg.

THE grand master repaired to Rome to thank the pope for his benefactions; and, after receiving his blessing, set out for the isle of Cyprus, and arrived happily at Limisso, in the head house of the order, and seat of its residence. He was expected there with impatience, not only because of the opinion they had entertained of his wisdom and capacity in government, but also in hopes that his presence and application would give new warmth to a scheme projected for driving the Sarazens out of the Holy Land.

GAZAN, son of Argun beforementioned, chām of the Mogul Tartars, king of Persia, and a descendant or successor of Genchizcan, was at 1300. the head of this league. Pachymerus, a Greek and cōtemporāy historian, has given us a character of that prince, which is too great, if it be a just one, not to be inserted here*. "When that prince, " says the historian, mounted the throne, he cast his " eyes upon the histories of Cyrus and Alexander the " great, to take from thence the model of his conduct. " He admired particularly the great qualities of the " vanquisher of Darius. In his military expeditions he
" made

* Pachym. 1. 2.

“ made use of the Iberians ; and did so, says this historian, as well in regard to the sincere piety of that nation, and their inviolable attachment to the Christian religion, as for their courage and intrepidity in the field. As he knew the cross was the trophy of the Christians, he placed it on the top of his standards, and 'twas under the protection of this sign of our salvation, that he gained glorious victories over the sultan of Egypt. He fell into Palestine, and, to gratify the Iberians that were in his army, he attacked the city of Jerusalem, and was very near delivering the sepulchre of our Saviour from the tyranny of the infidels.”

No body that reads this passage of the history of Pachymerus would have any other notion of Gazan but that he was a Christian : yet all the other writers of his nation, Arabians, Persians, poets and historians, maintain, that this prince was bred a pagan and idolater*, as most of the Tartars were at that time ; that he turned Mahometan afterwards, to conform to the religion of the greatest part of his subjects, who were of that profession, and, at the ceremony of his circumcision, took the name of Mahomet. The mistake of the Christian historians arose probably from hence: The Tartar had married a Christian princess of admirable beauty, daughter to Livron or Leo, king of Armenia, and, out of complaisance to the queen his wife, had allowed her the public exercise of her religion in his palace, which might induce the missionaries and travellers to believe, that Gazan himself was a Christian. Be that as it will, some time before, and even antecedent to the misfortunes of Henry king of Cyprus, a league was struck up between the Tartarian prince, the king of Armenia, his father-in-law and neighbour, the king of Cyprus, Amaury de Lusignan his brother, and the two orders of the templars and hospitallers, who were considered in the east as the principal strength, and only resource of the Christians.

HAITON

* See the Bibliotheque oriental in the word Gazan.

HAITON, lord of Curchy^b, nephew, or as others say, only cousin to the king of Armenia, an eye witness of these wars, has left us an exact account of them in his history of Tartary. 'Tis from this author that we learn what advantages these allies gained over the Sarazens. They defeated Nazer sultan of Egypt, took the famous city of Damascus, and afterwards reduced the greatest part of Syria. The hospitallers, who had no other view in this league but to chase the infidels out of the Holy Land, entered Palestine without opposition, at the head of a body of cavalry, which Gazan gave them for a reinforcement. They found the country open and defenceless; the cities, if they were not rather to be called villages, without any fortifications; Jerusalem destitute of walls, as well as Christian inhabitants; no body appearing to oppose their conquests. But that which facilitated these conquests made it afterwards impossible to maintain them. The Sarazens, after the taking of St. John d'Acre, had rased the fortifications of all the towns in Palestine, so that the kingdom was only a large country, exposed to the strongest power, and every force that was master of the field.

THE hospitallers, infinitely pleased with having made their way to the holy city, thought of rebuilding the walls, in order to maintain themselves there. But the chan of Tartary, being obliged to repass the Euphrates and return into Persia, to march against a body of rebels, that had made an insurrection in his absence, that prince recalled out of Palestine the troops which he had lent the hospitallers; and, after their retreat, there was no possibility, with the single forces of the order, to keep the field against the armies of the Sarazens.

ACCORDINGLY the soldan, after the Tartars were drawn off, fell again into Palestine; and, upon the news of his march, and that he was advancing with a mighty body of troops towards Jerusalem, the hospitallers, who had

had entered like conquerors, were forced to quit it in a manner like pilgrims.

GAZAN, in the mean time, having quickly pacified the troubles that had risen in Persia during his 1301. absence, resumed his first designs against the soldan of Egypt. The politic Tartar had no other view in re-establishing the Latin Christians in Palestine, but to make use of them afterwards for a barrier, to hinder the Sarazens of Egypt from having any communication with Syria. But having discovered by the former campaign how inconsiderable a force the kings of Armenia and Cyprus were able to bring into the field, and being sensible, that the military orders could not of themselves make head against the soldan's power, he was fully convinced, that, to drive the Sarazens both out of Syria and Palestine, and to enable the Christians to maintain themselves in the latter, it was necessary to engage the princes of the West in this war, and bring some crusade into the Levant, like the first of Godfrey de Bouillon, which had driven them out of the Holy Land.

THIS was the motive of a noted embassy, which he sent to pope Boniface VIII. and which afterwards proceeded onto France. There are some historians indeed, that ascribe this negotiation to Mahomet Gayateddin, otherwise called Algiaptou, brother and successor to Gazan. The Persians, in their tongue, call this latter Chodabenda, i. e. the servant of God : Haiton the historian names him Carbaganda, and says that his mother was a Christian, and that he was baptised and named Nicholas ; but that after his mother's death, he turned Musulman. But whoever was the author of this embassy, the person deputed upon that occasion, arriving at Rome, desired the pope in the chancery his master's name, to engage the most powerful princes of his communion, to join part of their troops to the armies he had on foot, in order to drive the Sarazens out of Syria and Palestine, offering to leave the Latin Christians the entire possession of the Holy Land.

THE embassador^a, to make his proposals go down the readier, politickly insinuated, that the cham his master was no way averse to embracing the Christian religion^b; an artifice perhaps new at that time, and too stale at this, but which serves at least for a proof, that this prince was either a Pagan or Mahometan.

UNLUCKILY for the ſucces of ſo great an enter-
prise, the pope was then in the violenteft fits of his im-
placable hatred to Philip the Fair, king of France,
whom in reproach he compared to the idol of Bel, or
Baal, by a ridiculous ſeſeless alluſion that his groſſ
ignorance of that Phænicien word betrayed him into.
The ground of this hatred was Philip's openly refuſing
to ſubmit to that absolute and despotic power, which
Boniface claimed over all Christian ſtates. He owned
indeed, that ſovereigns within their own dominions
were ſupreme in temporals; but then he pretended a
right of taking cogniſance of the diſferences that aroſe
between them, under pretence, as he ſaid, that it be-
hoved him to know, if they could in certain junctures
and circumſtaſces make war without ſin. In virtue of
this cavilling diſtincſion, the new caſuift was for draw-
ing to his own tribuнал the cogniſance and abſolute de-
ciſion of all their diſferences, and he threatened ſuch as
refuſed to ſubmit to it, to excommunicate them, to lay
an interdict on their dominions, and abſolve their ſub-
jeſts from their oath of fidelity. 'Twas the ſhortest
way of attaining to an universal monarchy; but unlucki-
ly for the ſucces of theſe pretenſions, the pontiff,
in the perſon of Philip the Fair, had to do with a
powerful prince, haughty and imperious in his nature,
infinitely jealous of the rights of his crown, rightly ap-
prized of thoſe of the pope's, and who at the ſame time

VOL. II.

C

that

* Spicil. t. 11. p. 609.

^b Parisis ipsa hebdomada Paschæ venerunt ad regem Francie
nuncii Tartarorum, dicentes, quod si rex & barones gentes iues in
Terræ Sanctæ ſubſidium deſtinarent, eorum dominus Tartarorum
rex Saracenos totis viribus expugnaret, et tam ipfe quam populus
ſuus efficerentur libenti animo Christiani. Contin. chon. de
Nangis ad ann. 1303.

that he denied them nothing that was due to the visible head of the church, did yet maintain with an invincible firmness, that those pontiffs, with regard to Christian monarchs, had no authority but what was purely spiritual, that this very authority was barely ministerial, and that they ought to govern the church of Christ according to the canons of general councils.

BONIFACE, enraged to meet with such an obstacle to the establishment of his chimerical project, had raised up enemies on all sides against France, and even against the person of the king. 'Tis to this pontiff, that the revolt of the Flemings, and the English war is ascribed. And whilst these open enemies were attacking the frontiers of the kingdom, the sovereign pontiff left no methods untried to raise seditions within it, and debauch the secular and regular clergy from the obedience they owed their sovereign.

SUCH was the disposition of Boniface, when the champion of Tartary's ambassador arrived at Rome. The imperious pontiff eagerly catched at this pretence of signalizing his pretended power over the person of the king and his subjects.

IN the first crusades, the popes, with regard to sovereigns, never made use of any means but those of intreaty and exhortation. But afterwards, and as opportunities offered, to get rid of princes whose power they were jealous of, they engaged them in those expeditions by motives of penance, and sometimes on pain of excommunication. Thus by menacing them with the censures of the church, they had created a sort of right in the papacy to send the greatest monarchs into the east in a state of exile, tho' still under the pretext of delivering the Holy Land out of the hands of the infidels. 'Twas with such views, that Boniface dispatched the bishop of Pamiers to the king. That prelate, who was animated with the spirit and haughtiness of his master, delivered his message to Philip, not so much like an ambassador and messenger of peace, as a herald sent to declare war against him.

HE told him, that it was the pope's intention, he should cross the sea immediately at the head of all the forces of France, and join his troops with those of the king of Persia, to drive the Sarazens out of Syria and Palestine. Boniface, under colour of this pious motive, had no design but to get the king at a distance from his own dominions, in hopes of establishing his pretended temporal power there in his absence. But besides that the haughtiness and insolence of his nuncio, tho' a Frenchman, was of itself abundantly sufficient to make the pope's proposals be rejected, that pontiff had to do with a prince infinitely jealous, as we have said, of the sovereign rights of his crown, who understood his true interests perfectly well, naturally frugal, and indeed so grasping at money, that his memory has been reproached for not always confining himself to just measures for raising it. Far therefore from being disposed to put himself to the necessary expences for so tedious an expedition, it was pretended, that he wanted even supplies to maintain the wars that the pope had secretly stirred up against him.

THERE did not likewise want suspicions, that Boniface had a design of making war upon France. Reports went current about, that the templars had offered their services to that pontiff, and had also furnished him with considerable sums to begin the war; so that Philip, instead of entertaining a thought of quitting his dominions in such a juncture, ordered the pope's nuncio away, who had spoken to him with so much haughtiness and insolence; and, by his dismission, the chancery's ambassador, who was come on purpose to France, saw his negotiation miscarry.

'TWAS a very sensible affliction to the hospitallers to hear of the ill success of this embassy. They saw their hopes of recovering the Holy Land father off than ever. Besides, they had but a very indifferent situation in the isle of Cyprus, considering the temper of the king, a covetous and jealous prince, who was for imposing taxes upon them, as we have said, though they had never paid any tribute under the kings of Jerusalem, but that

of their blood, which they daily shed so generously in defence of the Christians.

THE surprizing death of Boniface, who died through grief, that he was fallen under the power, and 1303. into the hands of the French, gave the hospitallers some hopes of seeing in a short time a more religious pope, who, instead of sowing, and keeping up divisions among Christian princes, as Boniface did, would on the contrary employ all the interest that his dignity gave him, to dispose them to unite together and form a new crusade.

ACCORDINGLY the cardinals, eleven days after Boniface's decease, chose in his stead Nicholas Bocassini, a dominican, cardinal and bishop of Ostia, a prelate of a holy life, and profound learning. He took the name of Benedict XI. and as soon as he was seated in the holy see, he expressed a great deal of eagerness to procure powerful succours, and a considerable armament to be sent into the east. But these pious dispositions were attended with no effects, by reason of the pope's death, who was only eight days on the throne of St. Peter.

THE conclave met at Perugia, where it continued near a year; and there was reason to fear it would not end so soon, because of the misunderstanding between the cardinals, who were divided into two factions, and had determined never to consent to the election of any person that was then in the conclave. Cardinal Francis Cajetan, nephew to Boniface, and inheritor of his hatred against Philip the Fair, and the two cardinal Colonna's, who were partisans of France, was at the head of one of the factions. The other party, which was devoted to the king, was headed by cardinal Dupré, an intimate friend of the two cardinal Colonna's, whom Boniface, during his pontificate, had, out of aversion to France, cruelly persecuted as well as all their house.

THE cardinals that were shut up in the conclave, assembled every day, conferred together sometimes in public and sometimes in private, and the most artful among them

them endeavoured to gain over some votes in the contrary faction.

CARDINAL Dupré, who was excellent at these weapons, and a most refined politician, addressing himself one day to cardinal Cajetan, " We do a great deal of mischief, says he to him, with all the appearance of frankness, and cause an infinite prejudice to the church, by keeping it so long destitute of a head :" adding, that, since they could not agree about a cardinal to be made pope, they must necessarily chuse some person, tho' not of the conclave, that was worthy of being advanced to that great dignity : and that, to facilitate the election, he was of opinion, that one of the factions should nominate any three archbishops that they pleased beyond the mountains, and the other faction should have the right of chusing within forty days whomsoever they liked best of the three for pope. Cajetan replied, that there was no equality in this proposal, and that every body must see plainly, that the faction which should name the three candidates, had vastly the advantage, since by their nomination, they were sure of having one of their creatures for pope. Cardinal Dupré owned it, but added, that to shew how sincerely he and the cardinals of his party wished to have an end put to the scandal which their divisions caused in the church, they were ready to give up that advantage to the cardinals of the other faction ; that those of his party would freely consent they should have the naming of the three candidates, out of whom the pope was to be chosen ; and that for their own parts they would only reserve to themselves the right of chusing out of three of their creatures, the person they thought the most deserving, and him that was least disagreeable to them.

BONIFACE's nephew communicated this proposal to his faction, ascribing it to the impatience which Dupré and the old cardinals had to get out of the con-

^a Jo. Villani lib. 8. c. 8. S. Antonin. p. 3. t. 21. Bern. Chron. Rom. Pont. Rāin. t. 15. Contin. ann. Eccl.

clave : and having brought the cardinals of his party into approve of it, a formal treaty was drawn up and signed by all the cardinals ; in consequence of which, Cajetan named three Ultramontain archbishops, all creatures of his uncle, and who, during that pope's pontificate, had espoused his interest against the king. The first of the three was Bertrand de Got, archbishop of Bourdeaux, a prelate of a noble house in Aquitain, but wedded to his pleasures, and eaten up with ambition, an intimate friend and entire confidant of Cajetan's, and a subject of the king of England's, who was then duke of Aquitain. Besides, this prelate was an enemy to Philip the Fair, and particularly so to Charles de Valois, that prince's brother, who, during the wars between the French and English, had ravaged the castles and lands of his brother and nearest relations. Yet this was the prelate upon whom cardinal Dupré fixed his eyes to make him pope. He knew him thoroughly, and made no question but a man of his character, would easily sacrifice his old friends and first benefactors to his promotion. He was likewise of opinion, that it would be no difficult matter, whilst Italy was infested with the factions and wars between the Guelphs and Gibbelines, to keep a man of his ambition and vanity in France, who would be charmed with shewing himself to his relations and countrymen in that height of power, to which the papal diadem was going to raise him. Cardinal Dupré communicated these views of his to Philip the Fair, by an express which he dispatched to him with great secrecy, and which went from Perugia to Paris in eleven days. He sent that prince the treaty between the two factions, and observed to him in his letter, that he had nothing to do but to make sure of the archbishop of Bourdeaux, who, to get at the papacy, would easily submit to all the conditions he should require of him.

THE king having perused these dispatches, and the treaty between the cardinals, saw plainly what advantages were to be drawn from it. He wrote immediately to the archbishop of Bourdeaux, that he had some affairs

fairs of consequence, in which he was particularly concerned, to communicate to him. He fixed at the same time a certain day on which he appointed him to repair to an abbey seated in the middle of a forest near St. John d'Angelu, promising to be there himself without fail, and enjoined him above all things a profound secrecy on this head.

BOTH were punctual to the appointment. They came to an interview in the morning in the church of the abbey. Philip, after hearing mass, required the archbishop to put his hand upon the altar, and swear to keep the secret he was going to confide to him inviolably. After this precaution, he told him, that it was in his power to make him pope ; and, to convince him of it, he shewed him the treaty made at Perugia between the cardinals, with the passage in Dupré's letter, where that cardinal, in his own name, and in the name of the cardinals of the French faction, refers it to the king to chuse which of the three archbishops he thought most worthy of the papacy.

THE archbishop of Bourdeaux read these instruments with great astonishment ; and, when he had ended, threw himself at the king's feet, and embraced them with a transport easier to be imagined than expressed, asked pardon of him for his past conduct, "I see
" well, sir, says he to him, that you are for rendering
" me good for evil ; if I am happy enough to be ad-
" vanced to the popedom, I beg of you to be assured
" that you shall share all the authority of it with me,
" and I am ready to give you all the assurances of it
" that you can demand for so great a kindness."

THE king raised him up graciously, and having embraced him in token of a perfect reconciliation, told him, that when he should be upon the throne of St. Peter, he desired, that he would grant him six favours, all of them just, and tending only to the good of the church and his kingdom, but he would be assured of them before he entered into any more particular engagements with him. The first two conditions which that prince proposed related only to the differences be-

tween him and pope Boniface, insisting, that he should annul all the acts of that pope against himself, the cardinals Colona, and his principal subjects. He required for the third condition, that he should promise him to condemn the memory of Boniface, and order his bones to be burnt, as used to be done with those of atheists and heretics. The fourth article was concerning the affair of the cardinals Colonna, whom Boniface had degraded for their adherence to France ; the king required that they should be re-instated in their former dignities, and entire restitution made to them of all their effects and possessions. Philip demanded, as the fifth condition, that he might have leave to raise the tenths upon the clergy of France for five years together. The sixth condition was not to be declared till after the ceremony of the future pope's coronation should be over. "But I will have you, says the king, "for a further assurance of your promises, take a solemn oath upon the holy sacrament, and give me "your brother and two nephews in hostage, whom I "will take with me to Paris, under pretence of reconciling them to the count de Valois, my brother, "and keep them there till you have fully made good "your word. 'Tis now for you, adds the king, to see "if you like the conditions."

THE ambitious prelate, drunk with joy and hope, promised every thing, and swore solemnly on the holy sacrament to perform the conditions required. He sent at the same time for his brother and nephews, and delivered them into the king's hands. That prince dispatched away immediately an express to cardinal Dupré, and those of his faction, with advice, that he had taken all the necessary securities from the archbishop of Bourdeaux for his own interest and those of the house of Colonna ; that he was actually bringing along with him to Paris the brother and two nephews of the archbishop, that they might, without any further delay, chuse him for pope. The king and that prelate parted equally satisfied with one another, and his majesty's express arrived at Perugia five days before the term agreed

on

on by the treaty was expired. Cardinal Dupré, apprized of the king's intentions, communicated them to the other cardinals of the French party, who thereupon notified to those of the contrary faction, that they were ready to execute their promise, and chose one of the three archbishops proposed for pope. Upon this notice, a solemn assembly was held in the chapel of the conclave : it was opened with the invocation of the Holy Ghost, after which they ratified a-new the treaty for the election. Then cardinal Dupré named Bertrand de Got, archbishop of Bourdeaux, for the vicar of Jesus Christ, which was followed with the acclamations of the whole sacred college, especially of the nephew and creatures of Boniface, who knew nothing of what had passed between the king and archbishop, and flattered themselves with having a pope of their own party, and an enemy to the king.

BUT that prelate had no sooner received the decree of his election, than, in the transports of his joy, on occasion of a good fortune so much above his hopes, he let slip a word which betrayed the secret of his reconciliation with the king of France. This was no longer doubted of, when they saw him summon the whole college of cardinals to meet at Lyons, for the ceremony of his coronation, which Philip honoured with his presence.

'TWAS after this great ceremony, that his majesty is said to have opened himself to the pope, upon the sixth condition that he had required of him at their interview, and which he was not to know till his coronation was over. The pontiff was strangely surprised to find that this condition contained the suppression and extinction of the whole order of the templars. The king, to support the justice of his demand, told him, that they were guilty of the most abominable crimes, and that he had good proofs of it. Clement, to make good his engagements, assured him, that he would apply himself to procure private informations to be taken on that subject, and desired Philip, on his part, to

com-

communicate to him what proofs he had against those knights.

THE new pontiff, after his coronation, declared, that, as long as the two factions of the Guelphs and Gibelines continued to tear Italy to pieces, he would take up his residence in France, and, in consequence of this declaration, set out for Bourdeaux, passing through Mâcon, Brives, Bourges and Limoges. The continuator of Nangis, in his account of the year 1305, relates, that in crossing these dioceses, he plundered, either by himself or his followers, all the churches and incumbents that he met with in his passage, so that the archbishop of Bourges, for his daily subsistence, was reduced to the necessity of assisting at all the offices of the quire, as a simple canon, to be entitled to a share in their daily dividends^a.

IT was not long before the Italian cardinals repented that they had placed a French prelate, so greedy of money, upon the papal throne. They were sensible, that if it continued any considerable time in France, they should have no great share in the government, nor consequently in the treasures of the church. Cardinal Mattheo Rosso Ursini, an Italian, and an enemy to the French, vexed to see himself over-reached by cardinal Dupré, and meeting one day in the pope's antichamber, " You have carried your point, says he with a sneer, " and we are transplanted to t'other side the mountains ; " and I either do not know the character of the Gascons, or I shall be much mistaken if we see the ho " ly see again at Rome this long time."

THAT capital of the Christian world, formerly the mistress and queen of nations, lost, by the removal of the

^a Papa Clemens, circa purificationem beatæ Mariæ à Lugduno recedens, Burdegalis per Matiscensem, Brivatum, Biturigas, ----- & Lemovicas iter faciens, tam religiosorum quam sacerularium ecclesias & monasteria, tam per se quam per suos satellites, deprædando, multa & gravia intulit eis damna, & frater Aegidius, Bituricensis, archiepiscopus per hujusmodi deprædationes ad tantam devenit inopiam, quod, tanquam unus de suis simplicibus canoniciis, ad pereciendum quotidianas distributiones pro vita necessariis horas ecclasiasticas frequentare coactus sit.

the court of Rome, the little it had left of the lustre of its antient empire. All the Italians made heavy lamentations for this translation, which, on account of the time it lasted, they have generally compared to the captivity of Babylon. Some historians have not scrupled to ascribe it to the pope's passion for the countess of Perigord, daughter to the count de Foix, a princess of singular beauty, and from whom, it is probable, he could not part without pain^a. The same authors accuse him of a scandalous traffick in holy things, to gratify his avarice^b.

PERHAPS the reader may think we have given too large a detail of the intrigues of this conclave; but, considering the facts which follow, we thought ourselves necessarily obliged to represent the character of this pope, and relate the secret causes of the complaisance he shewed afterwards for most of the designs of Philip the Fair, with regard to the templars, as well as the hospitallers of St. John.

THE new pontiff, desirous to signalize his zeal by some enterprise that would make a noise, and suit the taste of the age, proposed to send a new crusade into the east for the recovery of the Holy Land. With this view, and to be justly informed of the forces of the infidels, perhaps also to inquire into the accusations brought by the king of France against the templars, he sent an order to the two grand masters to come immediately

^a Hist. de M. l'Abbé Fleuri. I. 92. p. 239.

^b Questo papa fue huomo molto cupido di moneta è simoniaco, che ogni beneficio per moneta in sua corte si vendea, è fue lusurioso. Si dicea che tenea per amica la contessa di Paragordo, bellissima donna, figliuo la del conte di Foy. Giovan. Villani lib. 9. chap. 58.

Papa, ut chronica referunt, fuit nimis cupiditatibus deditus; propter quod scelus simoniæ, maximè a canonibus detestatum & punitum, multum viguit in curia sua circa beneficia. Quod autem quidam dicunt in papam non posse cadere simoniam; beatus Thomas hos reprobat: insuper & minus honestæ vitæ fuit, & communiter dicebatur, cum quadam comitissa, plucherrima muliere, contubernium habere. Sanctus Antoninus Flor. archiep. de concilio Viennensi. tit. 21. sect. 3.

mediately to him, with the principal knights of both orders.

" THE kings of Cyprus and Armenia*, (says he, in his letter to the grand master of the hospitallers,) solicit us earnestly to procure them some succour. " We have therefore resolved to consult about it with you, and the master of the temple, since, by the knowledge you have of the country, you are much better qualified than any others to advise us, in regard to the conduct and management of such an enterprize; besides, that next to the church of Rome, no one has a greater interest than you in the success of it. We order you therefore to come hither speedily, with as much secrecy as possible, and with a very little retinue, since you will find, on this side the sea, a sufficient number of your knights to attend you. But be careful to leave in the isle of Cyprus a good lieutenant, and a body of knights, capable of defending the city of your residence, that so your absence, which will not be long, may be of no prejudice to the affairs of your order: Nevertheless, do not neglect to bring along with you some knights, who, by their wisdom, experience and zeal, are qualified to give us proper advice, in conjunction with you." This letter is dated from Bourdeaux, June 6, 1306.

THE grand master of the hospitallers was at sea, when this letter was sent him from the isle 1306. of Cyprus, whither it was directed. He wrote back immediately to the pope to excuse himself, that he did not make so much haste in his voyage as his holiness seemed to recommend, being actually engaged in an enterprise which he had formed. The hospitallers, being tired out with the ill treatment they received from the king of Cyprus, and the oppression of his government; and seeing themselves cooped up as it were in a town, without the convenience of a port for their naval armaments, came to a resolution to abandon so improper an abode, designing to make themselves

* Rain. t. 15.

selves masters of some island in the neighbourhood of the Holy Land, where the order, without being accountable to any but their own superiors, might go to sea, and discharge the obligations and duties of their station.

THE grand master, whose thoughts were entirely taken up with this great design, which he kept very secret, fixed his eyes upon Rhodes, an island at a small distance from Palestine, and accommodated with an excellent port. This island, a member of Constantinople, suffered, like most of those of the Archipelago, in the revolution that happened in that capital, by the conquest which the French and Venetians made of it. The Genoese, for their part, had seized on most of the Cyclades and Sporades ; and Rhodes, and the little isles depending on it, also fell into the hands of those republicans, during the absence of their governor, a Greek lord, called John de Gabales. Vatacius, whom we have spoken of already, and who, in the dismembering of the empire, had erected one for himself, of which Nice was the capital, vexed to see the Latin princes pare off every day some morsel or other from the Greek empire, sent in A. D. 1249, John Cantacuzenus, his great cupbearer, with a strong fleet to drive the Genoese out of the isle of Rhodes. That Greek general arrived off the island, and landed his troops without opposition : but by great good luck for the Genoese, William de Villehardouin, a French lord, and prince of Achaia, and Hugh, a prince of the house of Burgundy, were passing at that time by Rhodes, in order to join St. Louis in the isle of Cyprus, and left the Genoese a body of troops, which helped them to drive out the Greeks. Vatacius, the most politic prince of his time, to make his advantage afterwards of the consternation the Latins were in at the captivity of St. Louis, the head of the crusade, sent Theodorus Protosebastus to Rhodes, who retook the island from the Genoese. The Greeks re-established their authority there ; but the empire being on the decline, some lords of the house of Galla, governors of Rhodes, intensibly set up for princes of the

isle ; and, to fortify themselves against their sovereign, they peopled it with a great number of Turkish and Sarazen merchants and inhabitants. 'Tis said likeways, that they admitted the infidel corsairs into their ports, who were likeways sure to find refuge there, when they were pursued by the gallies of the hospitallers, or by the ships of other Christian princes.

THE grand master, after coasting the isle of Rhodes, observing its ports and fortresses, and apprising himself of the number of its inhabitants, did not find that he had forces sufficient to attempt the conquest of it. Then he took a view of several small adjacent islands, which, though inhabited, are scarce any thing but rocks. But finding no fortified places in them, wherein he could maintain his ground, and fearing, that if he made an attempt on any of these little islands, it would discover his design upon Rhodes, he stood away for the isle of Cyprus, and returned to Limiffo. After this expedition, he was preparing to go and give the pope an account of the project he had in view, and to try if he could obtain from that pontiff, and the western princes, the necessary succours for such an enterprise; but he was stopped by an illness, which at last brought him to his grave.

ALL the knights were sensibly afflicted at the loss of the grand master, especially in a juncture so important to the order. The chapter being persuaded that Fulk de Villaret, his brother, was acquaint-

FULK DE ed with all the particulars of his secret
VILLARET. designs and was well qualified by his
valour, to put them in execution with

succes, thought proper to appoint him for his successor. This grand master, as soon as he was invested with that dignity, went on board the gallies of his order, and passed into France, to confer with the pope and the king about the enterprise of Rhodes, the design of which the late grand master had communicated to him. It was now above a year since James de Moley, of an illustrious family in the county of Burgundy, and the grand master of the order of templars,

had,

had, in obedience to the pope's orders, repaired to the town of Poitiers, where the court of Rome then was. The grand master was attended with most of his knights, who, tired out, like the hospitallers, with the oppressions and exactions which the king of Cyprus and his ministers were continually laying upon them, had at last abandoned the isle. They dispersed themselves afterwards into several countries of Christendom, where they had a great number of rich commandries, and no body was left in the isle of Cyprus but the great marshal of the order, and some commanders. The grand master is said to have brought prodigious treasures from the Levant, which he laid up afterwards in the house of the temple at Paris.

THAT lord, upon his arrival in France, kept the principal knights of his order with him ; and, thus attended, he waited upon the pope. They were all well received, the pontiff giving not the least hint of the secret motive that had induced him to send for them into France. He seemed even pleased with the turn and capacity of the grand master, discoursing with him frequently upon the subject of a crusade, which he pretended he would publish without loss of time. He carried his dissimulation so far as to deliver him a memorial, requiring him, at his leisure, to draw up an exact answer to it.

IN this memorial, the pope, still supposing the project of a crusade, demanded of him, what assistance the Latins might expect from the king of the lesser Armenia ; what were the ports, the roads, and the coasts of Palestine, where the forces of the crusade might land with most convenience ; and whether the troops should be sent from Europe in the great or the little passage, i. e. in the months of May or September, the ordinary seasons in which the caravans of pilgrims set out for the Holy Land. These embarkations being called great or little passages, according to the number of vessels and troops that were sent to the Levant.

THE pope, in a separate memorial, added, that the dissention, which was too often breaking out afresh

between the templars and hospitallers, having contributed not a little to the loss of the Holy Land, he had been advised, for the common good of both orders, and the general edification of the faithful, to incorporate the templars and hospitallers for ever, under one and the same rule, habit, and grand master. The sovereign pontiff ordered him to give him his sentiments freely and sincerely on this head. The pope, perhaps, by such an union of the templars with the hospitallers, whose reputation was untouched, would not have been sorry to save the templars from the king of France's instances for the extinction of that order.

HISTORY has conveyed down to us the answer which the grand master of the templars made to these two memorials of the pope. He says, in the first place, that in a battle, or decisive action, there was no depending on the Armenians, who were much more disposed to turn their backs, than stand their ground in an engagement ; and if they bounded the succour they were for sending into the East, merely to the defence of the lesser Armenia, without attempting any further conquest, his holiness ought to make be sensible, that the Armenians, being schismaticks, and enemies to all the Latin Christians, would never admit them into their castles and strong places, though they were come into the East only for their assistance ; and that the troops of the crusade, being thereby forced to keep the field, would be frequently surprised and massacred by the Turcomans and Bedovins that lived on the mountains bordering on Armenia, from whence they were continually making incursions into the flat country.

FOR these reasons, and many more, which are represented at large in this memorial, the grand master shews the insignificancy of the little passage, and a weak succour, which would serve, says he, only to destroy such as composed it, and render the Latin Christians contemptible. He concludes, that, to flatter themselves with the hopes of good success it was necessary to omit nothing that could be serviceable for making the passage as numerous and powerful as possible.

WITH

WITH this view he presses the pope to communicate his memorial to the kings of France, England, Germany, Sicily, Arragon, Castile^a, and all other sovereign princes of Christendom, whose hearts, says he, may God Almighty touch with his grace, and inspire them to drive the infidels out of a land dyed with the adorable blood of Jesus Christ.

He proposes in the next place to engage the Genoese, the Venetians, and other maritime powers, who had ports in the Mediterranean, to furnish the gallies and ships necessary for the great passage, and for transporting the troops of the crusade. He represents likewise, that the Christians not being masters of a foot of ground in the kingdom of Jerusalem, or in the principality of Antioch, if they pretended to drive out the infidels, their army ought to consist at least of 15,000 men of arms, and 5000 foot.

WITH regard to their landing, he advises, that the Christian army should, for refreshment, put first into the isle of Cyprus, from whence they might easily pass afterwards into Palestine. But as to the coast and place of the kingdom, where it was proper to make their descent, he desires the pope to excuse him from putting his opinion in writing, and allow him to explain himself on that head by word of mouth, either to him or to the king of France, for fear, that a design of such importance, and a point on which the whole success of the crusade depended, might come to be discovered, and consequently traversed by the infidels.

He intimates, that it would be very proper to send ten gallies in the spring towards the isle of Cyprus, to cruize at sea, and intercept the ships of some Christian merchants, who, preferring a sordid gain to the interests of religion, held criminal correspondences with the Sarazens, and carried them, in contempt of the prohibitions of the church, arms and timber ready worked and fitted, so that, for making their gallies,

D₃

they

² Philip the Fair, Edward II. Henry de Luxemburgh, Don Fadrique d'Ariagon, Don James, Ferdinand IV.

they had nothing to do but to join the several pieces together.

HE adds, that nevertheless the command of these ten Christian gallies ought not to be given either to the templars or hospitallers, for fear, that if those knights should catch any vessels belonging to the Venetian or Genoese merchants in this clandestine commerce, and seize them, they might draw upon the military orders the hatred and resentment of those two potent republics.

THE second memorial contains an answer to the pope's design of uniting the templars and hospitallers under one and the same rule and head. The grand master represents to him, that, during the pontificate of Gregory IX. and in the reign of St. Louis, a proposal had been made in the council of Lyons, for a project of the like nature, but much more comprehensive, the design being to incorporate all the military orders that were in the church together : that the pope and the king, who assisted both of them at that council, were pleased to consult brother William Beaujon, grand master of the hospitallers, and brother William de Courcelles, one of the principal knights of the order of St. John, who met at the same time at Lyons, and to hear their sentiments on this subject : that the grand master of the templars urged, that the kings of Spain, who were engaged in continual wars against the Moors, and drew their best forces from the military orders settled in their dominions, would never consent, that those Spanish knights, which depended on their respective sovereigns, should be put under the authority of a foreign head, or be incorporated with other military orders, that were instituted for different ends, and regulated by different statutes ; and that, upon these remonstrances of the grand master, they gave over the design.

HE owned, that after the loss of St. John d'Acre, this question was brought upon the stage again, and that pope Nicholas IV. to screen himself from the shame of not having furnished the least succour to the besieged, declaimed warmly in several consistories against the templars and hospitallers, as if, by their pretended

tended dissensions, they had occasioned the loss of that important place ; but that there was not one person in Christendom, nor even among the infidels, but knew that the grand master of the templars, the marshal of the hospitallers, and above four hundred knights of both orders, died in defence of that city, out of which there came but ten templars alive : and that all the projects and discourses of that pontiff about the necessity of an union, were attended with no effect. That pope Boniface VIII. who bore a particular affection for the military orders, and was desirous to unite them, only to render them more powerful, had likewise given over the design ; and that, after much reasoning upon the subject, it was resolved at last to let each order continue as it was, in its particular constitution, and keep to its own rules and form of government.

THE grand master, after producing these instances, enters next into a thorough examination of the affair, and represents to the pope, first, the danger to which he would expose the salvation of these military friars, by forcing them to quit their first rule, and putting them under the obligation of observing another, to which they had not received the grace of a particular call.

SECONDLY, he remonstrates to him, that, supposing such an union, the knights, tho' originally of different orders, being obliged to live together in the same community, would never fail to have disputes with one another about the preference of their first professions, and that these disputes between men of courage, and provided with arms, might degenerate into combats, to the great scandal of all Christendom.

THIRDLY, That in every house of the templars, they gave a general alms three times a week, and every day the poor had all the meat that came off the tables in the refectory ; that in like manner, the hospitallers, whose original foundation was on the foot of a continual exercise of charity, employed their alms chiefly in affording various helps and assistances to the sick and

pilgrims ;

pilgrims; and that, if two houses of different orders were to be reduced to one, there would be but a single charity for the poor, to their great detriment and prejudice: and the case would be equally the same with regard to the offices of divine worship, and all the exercises of piety, which were performed, tho' in a different manner, in the commandries of both orders.

FOURTHLY, says he, each order has one head and one grand master, and several officers of eminence, such as the priors, the bailiffs, the marshal, the grand commander, the draper, the hospitaller, and the turcopelier; and if, in the union proposed, they keep up these offices, there will be in every priory two persons with the same title. If they suppress one (says he) upon which of the orders shall that reform fall? Is it just, under pretence of such an union, to deprive old knights of their posts to which they have risen by their services, and by shedding their blood for the defence of Christendom?

I AM very sensible, continues the grand master, that the view in this union is to put an end to that jealousy and emulation, which too often reigns between warriors that aspire all to the same glory. But let it be considered, says he, by way of reply, that the Latin Christians have derived great advantages from this very emulation; that nothing has more contributed to raise the courage of one order, than the valour they have been witness of in another; and that it has been always observed, that if the hospitallers at any time sent for troops, ships, arms and provisions from their commandries, for the relief of the Holy Land, the templars, after their example, and to out-do them, if possible, made the more powerful armaments on their side.

'TIS not, most holy father, continues the grand master, but that I am convinced, that in a time like this, when all the world, princes, prelates, ecclesiastics and regulars, envy the great revenues of the two orders, and contrive various pretences to get them into their own hands, it would be a great advantage for us

to

to be united, that we may the better oppose the enterprises of such usurpers. But 'tis for your holiness to weigh this advantage against the reasons I have laid before you, and if you please, I will call a chapter, to be held in your presence, of the priors, bailiffs, and principal commanders that are on this side the sea. You may there, most holy father, inform yourself of their sentiments on this subject, and see how the whole order stands disposed to this union. After hearing them your holiness will, in your great wisdom, and in virtue of that sovereign power you have received from God, decide ultimately in this point, as shall appear to you most conducive to the general good of all Christendom.

HISTORY does not acquaint us with the use the pope made of these two memorials; nor was it till two years after, that he renewed the project of the crusade.

WITH regard to the union of the two orders, the pope, in all probability, was sensible of the inconveniences attending it, and the solidity of the grand master's reasons; and the pious and religious sentiments that appear throughout his last memorial could not but make an impression on him. Nor is it improbable, that the pope proposed this union of the templars with the hospitallers only as a sort of reform of the first, and to avoid bringing those crimes upon the board, which Philip the Fair had complained to him of in private, and which his ambassadors solicited him warmly to examine into and punish. Not to interrupt the thread of the narration, with regard to the particulars concerning the isle of Rhodes, I shall forbear to enter into the detail of this extraordinary event, and of the proceedings against the templars, till I come to the year in which that affair was ended.

THE design of the hospitallers, as we have said, was to abandon the isle of Cyprus, and endeavour to make themselves masters of that of Rhodes. But a project of such importance required forces superior to those of the order. The grand master, in hopes of obtaining assistance

sistance from the pope and king of France, went into that kingdom, and came to Poitiers, where they were both met by agreement to treat about the affair of the templars. Fulk de Villaret desired a private audience of them. He began with laying before them the cruel exactions with which the king of Cyprus and his ministers were continually loading the hospitallers ; the mistrustful and jealous humour of that prince, who, for fear of drawing upon himself the resentment and arms of the sultan of Egypt, and other infidel princes, obstructed the armaments of the order, and hindered the knights from going out of his ports. The grand master, after shewing how impossible it was for his order to continue any longer in the territories of a prince governed by such timorous politics, acquainted them with the intended enterprise on the isle of Rhodes. He laid before them all the advantages of it, and represented to them, that it would serve as a staple and place of rendezvous for all the crusades and Christian fleets that passed into the east ; that the conquest of this island ought to be considered as a sure earnest of that of the Holy Land, upon account of the great number of vessels that the knights would put to sea, which would hinder the Turkish and Sarazen corsairs, from carrying any succours to the infidels in Judæa. But he added, that the forces of his order were not sufficient for so great an enterprise, and they could not engage in it, without being assured of the assistance of the common father of the faithful, and that of the most powerful monarch of Europe.

THE pope and the king, persuaded, as they generally were at that time all over Christendom, that there was not a more meritorious action whereby to gain heaven, than to engage in, or contribute to these holy wars, were lavish in their praises of the grand master, and the knights of St. John : and, to encourage them to pursue so noble a project, they promised them mighty succours. The pope, thinking the conquest of Rhodes would be a great honour to his pontificate, advanced

ninety thousand florins to the order out of his own purse, for the levying of troops.

FOR the better covering the secret of this enterprise, they published a general crusade for the recovery of the Holy Land. The pope annexed plenary indulgences to it, with all the privileges that his predecessors had granted in the like expeditions; and even such as should contribute to the expence of this armament were comprehended in the benefit of these apostolical graces. A great number of persons of all conditions, especially in Germany, abandoned their country, and listed in this holy militia. The very women would have a share in the crusade; several parted even with their rings and jewels, and an historian pretends, that the knights of St. John sold them for a trifle, for want of knowing their value. All this money was laid out in purchasing vessels, arms, and provisions^a.

CHARLES II. king of Sicily, and the commonwealth of Genoa, tho' they did not know the secret design of this expedition, furnished galleys to transport such as engaged in the crusade. The rendezvous was at Brundusium, in the further part of the kingdom of Naples, whither they flocked in such numbers, that the knights, not having transports enough, and fearing to be incumbered with a multitude of people of all conditions, contented themselves with chusing out of this vast crowd such as were best armed, and distinguished by their quality and condition. It is said, that a great number of gentlemen of the best families in Germany were there, who upon this occasion, took the habit and cross of St. John; and these illustrious knights were presented to the grand master, by brother Heltwig de Randersack^b, great prior of Germany, who, at the head of such a brave and honourable company, acquired a great deal of glory in this expedition.

AFTER

^a Pro passagio congregata fuit pecunia & armorum ac aliarum rerum copia, offerentibus fidelibus viris ac mulieribus jocalia & quæ habebant carissima, hospitalariis ad hoc missis, qui vili pretio distrahebant. Ex quinta vita Clementis V. Bal.

^b Pantal. hist. Johan. Basileæ. 1581.

AFTER this, the grand master took leave of the pope, who heaped favours and blessings in abundance upon him, and the order in general. He particularly granted them, in case the enterprise succeeded, the right of naming the archbishop of Rhodes, in a vacancy of the see. The weather was so foul, that they could not set sail till the beginning of the spring, when the Christian fleet coasted Albania, passed by the Morea, and the isle of Candia; and, leaving Rhodes on the left, at a sufficient distance to give no suspicion to the Greeks and infidels, stood in for the isle of Cyprus, and landed in the port of Limisso.

THE grand master stayed no longer there than was necessary to take on board the knights that were in the island, with all the effects of the order, which being done he put to sea again. The king of Cyprus, the neighbouring princes, and even the knights and troops of the crusade that were on board, were all persuaded that this armament was intended for the Holy Land. But the grand master, after some days sail put into Macri, on the coast of Lycia, either to take in water and refresh himself, or else to wait for the return of some spies that he had sent to take a view of the isle and town of Rhodes, and upon the advices they brought, to take the last measures for the landing of the army ^a.

THIS was in all probability the place from whence, as the historian Pachymerus relates, he dispatched ambassadors, in the name of the order, to the emperor Adronicus, to acquaint him with his enterprise, and demand the investiture of Rhodes, which held indeed of the empire, but had been seized by some rebel Greeks, in concert with the Sarazens, who, to fortify themselves in their usurpations, had called in some corsairs to their assistance.

THESE ambassadors represented to him, that the order engaged to drive out those pirates which infested all the seas of the empire, and that, in consideration of the investiture, and in token of vassalage, they would furnish him every year three hundred knights, most of them

^a Lib. 7. c. 30, & 31.

them fit for commanding, which he might put at the head of his troops on the frontiers of Persia.

BUT Andronicus, being naturally an enemy to the Latins, as most of the Greek princes were, rejected the proposal with contempt. A castle which he still enjoyed in the island (as the Greek historian relates) and some small shadow of a precarious sovereignty, which the Guallas still complimented him with, made him fancy, that it would be easier for him to recover his whole authority there, whilst in their hands, than if the hospitallers, supported by the princes of the west, were masters of it. Whilst this negotiation was carrying on at Constantinople, the grand master, who expected what would be the issue of it, had set sail, and after publicly declaring his design, had made a descent upon the isle of Rhodes, surprised the Greek and infidel inhabitants, and landed his troops, provisions and military engines, with very little opposition^a.

VARIOUS are the names that have at different times been given to the isle of Rhodes. The Greeks called it Ophiusa, or the isle of serpents, because of the multitude of serpents that infected it. Some say, that it had the name of Rhodes from a rose bud made of brass, which was taken up out of the foundation of Lindus, one of its chief cities, and that the inhabitants stamped the figure of it on their coin. But an able antiquary has shewn, that those who espouse this sentiment, have mistaken a rose for the flower of a pomegranate, which the Rhodians ordinarily made use of in dying their cloth, and which they impressed upon their coin for the same reason that the Tyrians stamped theirs with the shell of that valuable little fish called the purple.

VOL. II.

E

The

* Anno eodem 1306, hospitallarii cum exercitu Christianorum oppugnare cœperunt insulam Rhodi cum circumadjacentibus insulis circiter quinque, quæ ab infidelibus Turcis inhabitabantur sub dominio imperatoris Constantinopolitani : cœperunt autem statim ab initio alias insulas & castella : steteruntque in pugna & conflictu obdidentes pariter et obfessi annis quatuor contra Turcos & obtinuerunt finaliter Christiani. Ex quarta vita Clementis V. autore Bernardo Guidonis episcopo Lodovensi.

The most common and probable opinion derives the original of the name of Rhodes, from the quantity of roses with which that island is stocked almost all the year round.

THE island of Rhodes is situate in that part of the Mediterranean which is called the Carpathian sea. It has the isle of Cyprus on the east, that of Candia on the west, Egypt on the south, and on the north lie Carria and Lycia, which make part of Asia Minor, now called Natolia, from which it is divided only by a channel, not above twenty miles broad. It is about sixscore miles in circumference, the air is clear and temperate, the climate mild, and the soil almost every where fertile : the country abounds particularly in fruit-trees of all sorts. There were anciently iron and copper mines in it ; and the inhabitants who were famous for the perfection to which they carried their improvement of all manner of arts, employed these metals in making arms, warlike instruments, and especially statues, of which there were reckoned to be in the old town of Rhodes, no less than three thousand of different sizes, all wrought by excellent workmen, and representing either deities, princes or illustrious men. The city was, if I may use the expression, peopled with them ; but of all these images the most remarkable and surprizing was a colossus, consecrated to the sun, the tutelar god of the isle. Pliny tells us, that it was seventy cubits high, and that it was the work of Chares of Lindus, a disciple of Lysippus. An earthquake overturned this prodigious statue. There were few persons, adds the historian, that could clasp its thumb in their arms ; its fingers were bigger than several statues, and large cavities being discovered after its fall, they found great stones within, which the excellent artist had so adjusted, as to poize the weight of the colossus, and keep it firm upon its feet. I forbear to speak of the paintings and pictures with which their temples were filled, all master-pieces of art, and the works of the Parrhasius's, the Protogene's, the Zeuxis's, and the Apelles's. The isle of Rhodes was

less famous for its academies, and for the great men that came out thence, accomplished in all kinds of literature. 'Tis sufficiently known to have been the school of the Romans, particularly for eloquence, and whither they went to perfect themselves in the talent of speaking, so necessary in that commonwealth, for all that were concerned in the government.

BUT what is yet more surprizing, is, that the Rhodians, a people of such application to arts and sciences, which seem only calculated for peace, were no less famous for their arms, their conquests, and their colonies. They excelled especially in the art of navigation; their ports were filled with ships; they had arsenals and magazines capable of fitting out whole fleets; and they became so powerful by sea, that there was not in all Asia a monarch but courted their alliance: but they never employed their forces more willingly than against pirates. 'Twas by their skill in sailing, and a wise discipline, says Strabo, that they so long kept possession of the empire of the sea.

BUT all these talents which made this isle so famous in the time of the Greeks and Romans, were entirely neglected by the Greeks of the lower empire. The revolutions that happened in their own government, and in that of several other nations, to which they were afterwards subject, did no less contribute to the fall of this maritime empire; and the ignorance and effeminacy of the Rhodian Sarazens; who, except some corsairs, rarely ever went to sea, gave the finishing stroke to their power and former reputation.

SUCH was the condition of the island, when the grand master entered it at the head of his army. The infidels, who were the main strength of the place, uniting with the Greeks, the old inhabitants of the isle, had frequent engagements with the hospitallers, and the troops of the crusade, which the grand master had brought from Europe. There was some action or other almost every day; and it is surprising, that the ancient historians have not left us the particulars of them; but that the success was various, is evident from the length of the

war, which lasted near four years. The Greek emperor, flattering himself that if he could drive out the Latins, he should remain master of the isle, sent a great body of troops against them. The grand master, on the other hand, being sensible, that the success of his enterprize depended on the taking of the town of Rhodes, resolved, notwithstanding this succour, to besiege it: he sat down before the town, and his knights, by his example, threw themselves into the greatest dangers to forward the conquest. But as most of the crusade were drawing off one after another, and the army was at last reduced to the troops of the order alone, the siege was turned into a blockade. The besiegers were in a short time besieged themselves by the Greeks and Sarazens, who stopped up the avenues by which they used to fetch in their provisions, or march out for forage. The hospitallers were at last in want of troops, provisions and money; but the grand master found a supply for every thing in his own capacity and courage, which the greatest difficulties served only to whet and improve. He borrowed considerable sums of the bankers of Florence, and with this supply, and the money he raised from the commandries beyond sea, he levied new troops, paid off the old, and allowing them some days for refreshment, he went out of his intrenchments, with a resolution either to vanquish or die, marched directly against the enemy, and offered them battle.

THE action was bloody, and they fought on both sides with a warmth and fury to be expected between foreign troops that would seize a country, and inhabitants that are defending their houses, lands, wives and children; the strongest motives in nature to animate and put fire into a people the least warlike. Historians give us no farther account, than that there was a great deal of bloodshed on both sides; that the grand master lost the bravest of his knights; but that their valour and resolution at last carried the day, and the Greeks and infidels, no longer able to stand before them, quitted the field of battle; and several Sarazens,

who

who despaired of being able to make head against the Latins, fled to the sea-side, embarked, and, landing in the isles of the Archipelago, and on the coast of Lycia, carried thither the first news of their defeat.

THE grand master brought his victorious troops back into his lines, and continued the siege with new vigour. After he had gained the principal fortifications, the knights, at the head of the troops, advanced to storm the place, and, mounting through a shower of arrows and stones, which the besieged let fly at the assailants, planted the grand master's standard on the top of the breach, and carried the Aug. 15.
place^a. They spared the lives of the Chri- 1310.
stian inhabitants, and gave them their liber-
ty, but the infidels were cut in pieces. This is the
sum of what the historians of that time say in their short
account of this expedition. The conquest of the capi-
tal was followed with the taking of the castle of Lin-
dus, which is situate in the eastern part of the island.
Near this castle there is a port and two bays, lying to
the north, one of which is called to this day the bay of
serpents. The other fortresses shared the same fate,
and the whole island was, in less than four years, reduced
under the dominion of the hospitallers. As an eternal
monument of a conquest so useful to Christendom, and
so glorious to the order of St. John, all nations, by
common consent, gave the hospitallers the name of the
knights of Rhodes: and it is by this name that we shall
for the future speak of a body of knights that continued
to make themselves as useful to Christian princes, as
they were formidable to the Mahometans.

THE grand master's first care was to repair the walls
and fortifications of the town of Rhodes, which he
had ruined during the siege: in the next place, he
brought all the vessels of the order into the port; which

E 3

were

^a Anno Domini 1310, in festo assumptionis beatæ Mariæ, exer-
citus Ch̄istianorum, cum hospitariis, obtinuerunt civitatem
Rhodi, quæ est caput & metropolis totius regionis & insularum vi-
cinarum. Ex vita Clementis V. p. 72.

were fitted out immediately, and laden with troops, ammunition and provisions : the grand master went himself on board the fleet, and set sail. Of all the conquests that the old Rhodians had made, or colonies that they had settled in different countries, there was nothing left at that time under their dominion, but eight or nine small adjacent isles, or rather clusters of rocks and shelves, which were then called the isles of the Rhodians. Such were the isles of Nisara, Lero, Calamo, Episcopia, Chalce, Simia, Tilo, and Cos, or Lango. To reduce these isles under his obedience, the grand master had only the trouble of appearing before them. Nisara, called by the ancients Nisyris, was situate in the Archipelago, two leagues from the isle of Cos, or Lango, and at the same distance from the province of Caria. This isle had in it a town of the same name, which in ancient times was famous for a temple dedicated to Neptune, for hot and wholesome baths, and a good port. The grand master, in concert with the supreme council of the order, granted this isle in fief to John and Bonaville Assatiers, two brothers, who had signalized themselves in the conquest of Rhodes ; and this feoffment was made on condition, that they should build immediately one galley of sixscore oars, well provided with soldiers and ammunition, and be obliged to go on board it themselves, and repair to such places as should be appointed by the orders of the grand master.

THAT prince passed from thence to the isle of Lero, which is about eighteen Italian miles in circumference. There are quarries of marble all over it : the whole isle is but a rock or mountain, on the highest part of which there was a castle to defend the entrance of the port from any attempts of the corsairs. Though the isle of Calamo is larger, and at least forty miles in compass, yet it is neither more fertile nor rich than Lero ; 'tis indeed nothing but rocks and mountains. The soil appeared so dry and barren to the grand master, that he was surprized to see near the port the ruins of a great city,

the

the inhabitants whereof could not, in all probability, have any way of subsistence but by commerce.

THE isles of Episcopia, Calche, and Tilo, afforded the knights as easy conquests, but not at all more profitable than the former. That of Syma, or Simia, seemed more important, by reason of the excellency of its wines, and the number of goats that are bred there. The children in this island were brought up to swim, and dive in the sea, in order to fish at the bottom of the water for sponges, which are in great plenty all about the island ; and there was a law among them, in former times, prohibiting young men from marriage, till they could dive twenty fathom deep in the water, and continue there for some time. This isle was still famous among those of the Archipelago, for the skill of its carpenters, who built pinks and small frigates, so light and swift for sailing or roving, that there was no vessel could come near them. It is said, that the grand master caused a tower of vast height to be built there, on the top of a mountain, from whence they could discover ships at a great distance from the shore, and that he ordered the inhabitants, when they saw any appear, to send advice of it to Rhodes by their light barks, or give notice by the stated signals of lighting up fires in the night-time, and making a thick smoke by day.

OF all these islands, if we may give them that name, Cos, or Lango, famous for the birth of Hippocrates and Apelles, was the most considerable. 'Tis near forty Italian miles in length, and about seventy in circumference.

THIS island has that of Rhodes on the south-east. 'Tis about an hundred miles distant from Asia Minor, or Anatolia, which lies directly east of it. It has the isle of Calamus on the west, and that of Scarpanto on the south : the soil of it is fertile, and it produces fruits of all sorts in great plenty. It excels in wines, which pass for the most delicious in those parts. The grand master observed there a little town, called Lango, from the name of the island, situate by the sea-side, at the end of a great bay, and at the foot of an hill, which

termi-

terminates in a plain. The port was at that time large and convenient ; but some time since, stormy weather, and the waves of the sea, have driven in such a quantity of sand, that the mouth of the port is almost choaked up, and it admits none but little vessels, large ships and gallies being obliged to stay in the road adjoining, which is clean, firm, sandy, and proper for anchorage.

THE grand master, perceiving the importance of the isle, caused a plan of a castle, fortified with several square towers, to be marked out ; which, by his vigilance and care, was finished in a short time, and he left a knight to command there. Such as succeeded him in that post, encouraged commerce in the island, adorned the town with fine houses, and these with an infinite number of marble pillars and statutes : and this isle became afterwards so powerful, under the government of the order, that it was looked upon as a second Rhodes, and made a bailiwick, and an episcopal see under the Metropolitan of Rhodes.

THE grand master having established his authority, and ordered all things to his mind in these islands, came back to Rhodes in triumph. He was in hopes of enjoying there, with comfort and tranquility, the first fruits of his victory, when he found himself attacked by a formidable enemy, raised up against him by the corsairs and the other Mahometans, who had joined with the Greek inhabitants in defending the isle of Rhodes against the knights. These infidels, after their defeat, and to avoid the first fury of the victorious soldiers, had got on board some barks, and, under the shelter of the night, had landed safe on the coast of Lycia, from whence they dispersed themselves into different places, and part of them took refuge in the territories of Ottoman, carrying thither their complaints, and the history of their calamities.

OSMAN, or Ottoman^a, from whom the Turkish emperors of that denomination are descended, reigned at that time over part of Bithynia, a provence of Asia Minor,

^a *Observations sur l'origine des Turcs*, l. 3. c. 8.

nor, or Natolia. That prince, either out of zeal for his religion, or out of ambition, and a desire of aggrandizing himself, or it may be to prevent such bold and enterprizing neighbours from settling so near his dominions, took these refugees into his protection, and resolved to drive the knights out of the isle of Rhodes before they had time to establish their dominions there : this we are now going to relate ; but perhaps the reader will not be displeased to have a more particular account of the original, the fortune, the designs and conquests of a prince and house, which, from very weak beginnings, has extended itself, with a wonderful rapidity, into three parts of our continent, and laid the foundation of this new empire almost at the very time that the knights of St. John seized the isle of Rhodes, as if Providence had directed them thither, to serve as a barrier against Ottoman and his successors, and stop the progress of the Turkish arms by their valour.

THERE are different accounts of the origin of this house ; some derive it from a Tartar, or Nomadian shepherd, who, quitting the care of his flock, applied himself to arms, set up for a dueller, and, upon vanquishing, in single combat, a Greek trooper, belonging to the army of the emperor John Comnenus, received, by way of recompence, from Aladin, sultan of Iconium, the town of Ottomanzic, from whence his posterity have taken their name.

THOUGH the Turks in general are not usually fond of counterfeit genealogies, leaving that illusion to the vanity of Christians ; yet the princes of this house, after they were arrived to that grandeur and height of power, which made them formidable to all their neighbours, did not care to own so mean an original ; and, in defect of truth, were forced to have recourse, like a great many others, to fable and romance. They pretended that the Tartar we are speaking of, was a prince of the illustrious house of the Comneni, and nephew to the emperor John Comnenus, who meeting with ill treatment, retired, in hopes of revenging himself, to the court of Aladin, turned Mahometan and married the sultan's daughter, who

who having for her portion the town of Ottomanzie, with several villages depending upon it, their posterity took their surname from thence down to sultan Ottoman, who distinguishing himself above all his race by his valour, laid the foundation of the new monarchy of the Turks, and left the name of Ottoman to the famous descendants of that Comnenus, who was nephew to the emperor.

THUS the romance ; but instead of such a piece of flattery and imposture, take the true history of the fact as follows^a. It appears from all the writers of that time, that the original of this house cannot be carried higher than one Soliman, who lived A. D. 1214, and in the year 611 of the Hegira. He was chief of one of those tribes of Nomades, who, having no particular country of their own, wandered from place to place, stopping successively wherever they were suffered to do so, and where they found good pasture for their flocks. It is said, that this Tartar, or Turk, being driven out of Persia with his tribe, was drowned in attempting to swim cro's the Euphrates on horseback.

AFTER his death, Orthogul, or Orthogru, one of his children, became the head and leader of the tribe, and applied himself, for a place of retreat, to Alaédin III. of the Selgeucidian race of Turcomans, and sultan of Iconium: that prince took him into his service, and assigned his tribe some lands in Armenia Minor to inhabit. Ottoman, son to Orthogul, by his courage and valour carried his hopes and fortune to a higher pitch. His tribe and troops increased considerably by a great number of adventurers that joined him, and drawn by the fame of his valour and liberality, were desirous to fight under his banner. He made them brave soldiers, and excellent warriors, and the success of his arms kept pace with his courage. Alaédin, charmed with his reputation, sent him a vest, a sabre, a standard, and a pair of kettle drums. It is reported, that as often as Ottoman heard the sound of that warlike musick, to shew his respect to the sultan, he never failed, if he was sitting,

^a *Histoire de Mahomet II. par la Guilletierre.*

ting, to rise up, thereby signifying, as it were, that he was always ready to march at his command. But notwithstanding these exterior marks of zeal and submission, the sultan, who was old, and without issue, grew jealous of him, and dreading his courage and ambition, put him upon making war against the Greeks, for fear he should turn his arms against himself.

OTTOMAN took whole provinces and considerable towns from the Greek emperors, which rendered him so powerful, that he assumed the title of sultan, with the consent of Alaédin himself. A. D. 1299. Others say, that he was not invested with that sovereign title, till after the death of his master. Hegir. 699,

THAT prince, the last of the Selgeucides, being dead, his generals, like Alexander the Great's captains, divided his dominions among them. Part of Bythinia and Cappadocia fell to Ottoman. That prince knew how to maintain this rising empire, by new conquests, which he gained in Lycia and Caria, as well as by the wisdom of his government, and the singular goodness of his nature ; a virtue rarely to be found in a warlike prince and a conqueror. The fame of his affability has been conveyed down by tradition among the Turks, and is preserved to this day. When their emperors mount the throne, amidst the public acclamations, and among the virtues worthy of a sovereign, they never fail to wish them the goodness of Ottoman ; which shews, that they are heroes, and virtuous princes, that found and raise empires, and tyrants and effeminate ones that lose them.

THE prince we are speaking of, being solicited by the Mahometans, whom the knights had chased out of Rhodes, put his troops on board a fleet, landed in the isle, advanced towards the capital, and invested it. The grand master had scarce time enough to repair the walls, but the bastions and fortifications were still in a ruinous condition. Experience shewed, on this occasion, that no place can be more securely fortified, than by the courage and valour of those that defend it.

The knights stood several storms : the Turks lost abundance of men in these assaults ; and Ottoman, that was so successful in all his enterprises, miscarried in this, and was obliged to raise the siege and embark.

SEVERAL historians pretend, that the knights of Rhodes owed their deliverance, and the preservation of their late conquest, to Amée V.

1310. called the Great, count of Savoy. They say, that this prince, coming with a mighty fleet to their succour, landed his troops, advanced against the enemy, defeated them in battle, and forced Ottoman to raise the siege, and re-imbarke. These writers add, that Amée, to preserve the memory of this great event, and so glorious a victory, took thereupon, for his device, these four capitals, divided by stops from one another, F. E. R. T. which were afterwards explained by these Latin words, *Fortitudo ejus Rhodum tenuit*, meaning, that the valour of that prince preserved the town of Rhodes ; nay, they would needs have it, that Amée, after this battle, struck the eagle of Savoy out of his arms, and took in its stead the cross of St. John.

THOUGH an event so extraordinary in itself, and so honourable for the house of Savoy, has been related by an infinite number of writers, and is mentioned too in the historians of the order, yet the strict regard we owe to truth, obliges us to declare, that we look upon this relation as false, false both in substance and in all its circumstances.

IT is not true, that Amée came into the isle of Rhodes, and made war there, either in 1310, or in the years which immediately preceded or followed the conquest of it by the knights of St. John

THAT prince^a, in 1309, was in England, and present at the ceremony of the coronation of Edward II. and the year following, A. D. 1310, in September, he was at Chamberry, where he entertained Henry II. count of Luxemburg, emperor elect, and attended him afterwards in his Italian voyage to Rome, whither that prince went to receive the imperial crown ; and it

is

is plain from cotemporary historians, that he did not stir from the emperor either in that or the following year.

WITH regard to the mysterious device, upon which they found this pretended expedition into the isle of Rhodes, Louis of Savoy, baron de Vaux, who died in 1501, stamped it upon his coin above ten years before Ottoman attacked the knights ; and we still see upon the tomb of Thomas of Savoy, father of Amée V. whom we are now speaking of, the representation of a dog lying at his feet, with a collar, about which we read the word Fert, without any points to disjoin the letters.

NOR is there any more force in the proof they would draw from the cross of the order of St. John, which they suppose was first born by Amée, in the arms of his family. For besides, that the princes of Piedmont bore the same cross long before, we find it as high as A. D. 1304, in a seal of Thomas of Savoy, fixed to a treaty which he made that very year with Stephen de Coligni, lord of Andelot ; which shews clearly, that all that they have invented to explain these four mysterious letters, is a mere fable, and that the knights of Rhodes owed the first defence of that place to nothing but their own valour and their arms.

THE grand master, as soon as he saw the Turks re-imbarked, to put the town of Rhodes for the future in a good state of defence, strengthened the walls with a good rampart, and added new fortifications to it. After this he applied himself with great diligence to restore commerce to its former flourishing state, which, before the war, and indeed in all ages, had made it one of the most considerable towns of Asia. His port was free and open to all nations : a great number of Christians, especially of the Latins, who, after the loss of the Holy Land, had dispersed themselves in different parts of Greece, flocked thither to settle themselves, and live under the standard of St. John, from which they had so often found protection. Out of this medley of knights and inhabitants, as well Greeks as Latins, a new war-

like and trading state was formed, that soon became as potent by its riches as it was formidable by the courage and valour of its new sovereigns.

THE fame of this conquest, and the news of the raising of the siege, passed soon into the west. 'Twas the subject of universal joy in all the states of Christendom. It was followed with a comparison between the two military orders, not at all to the advantage of the templars. They said, that the hospitallers had never shewn any disposition to give over the hopes of driving the infidels some time or other out of the Holy Land ; that they had staid in the east for this end ; and that their late conquest of an island so considerable as that of Rhodes, secured a commodious port for all the crusades : whereas the templars, by their precipitate retreat into Europe to their commandries, and by the effeminate and luxurious lives they led there, seemed to have renounced their profession, and left the holy places for ever as a prey to the Turks and Sarazens. These discourses, which were not destitute of truth, with others still more odious that were privately spread abroad, determined the king of France to prosecute his design of suppressing that order.

WE do not certainly know in what year that prince took up this terrible resolution against the templars. It only appears from history, that a citizen of Beziers, named Squin de Florian, and a templar that had apostatized from his order, having been apprehended for enormous crimes, and committed to the same dungeon, these two villains despairing of life, confessed one another, for want of the sacrament of penance, which at that time was not administered to criminals going to execution. The same practice was in use among such as travelled by sea, if in a storm they found themselves in danger of being lost, and there was no priest in the ship.

SQUIN having heard the templar's confession, called one of the king's officers, and told him that he was ready to reveal a secret to that prince, of such importance, that he would receive more advantage from the know-

knowledge of it, than from the conquest of an entire kingdom ; but that he would never discover it to any body but the king himself. Other historians ascribe this fact to a templar prior of Montfaucon, and to another knight of the same order, called Noffodci, who, for their impieties and infamous lives, had been both condemned by the grand master and council of the order, to be immured for life.

WHATEVER were the names of these villains, Philip the Fair, at the instance of him that desired to speak with him, and perhaps out of impatience to know the secret which was to procure him such immense riches, sent for him to Paris. He resolved to hear himself what he had to say, and after promising him a full pardon, and even a reward, if he told the truth, the criminal, who had drawn up a plan of his accusation, charged the whole body of the templars with robbery, murder, idolatry, and sodomy. He added, that when a templar was received into the order, they obliged him to renounce Jesus Christ, to spit upon the cross in token of his abhorrence of it; and that these knights being secret Mahometans, had, by a vile piece of treachery, sold the Holy Land to the sultans and princes of that sect. More of this nature may be seen in the collection of Peter Dupuy, where there is a particular detail of all the abominations and obscenities which this informer charged upon the order, and which decency does not allow us to mention here.

THE king gave the pope an account of these accusations in the interview he had with him at Lyons, and pressed him still more closely upon the same subject the year following at Poitiers, where they met by concert to treat of this grand affair. But it does not appear that the pope had as yet taken any method but that of private information. As the ambassadors, which the king left at the pope's court, solicited him continually to condemn this order, we have a letter of Clement's to the king, dated July 9. in which he declares expressly, that if the corruption charged upon the templars was as general as he pretended, and the whole order was

to be abolished, he would have all their effects and revenues employed for the recovery of the Holy Land, and would not suffer the least part thereof to be converted to other uses; which would make one believe, that the pope suspected the prosecution carried on against the templars, was levelled as much at their great riches and estates, as against the irregularity of their manners.

It appears likeways that the pope, either on account of this affair, or that of Boniface, whose memory the king insisted he should condemn, and censure him as an impious person and an heretic, finding himself beset with the ministers of that prince, had been desirous of a time to be out of his territories; and that he even disguised himself to escape from Poitiers, and in A. D. 1306, set out with some cardinals for Bourdeaux, without any other attendants but some males to carry his money. But being discovered on the road by the king's emissaries, he thought it best to return back again to Poitiers^a.

PHILIP, who was warm and impatient, and could not bear with the pope's slow and dilatory way of proceeding, gave private orders to apprehend, on one and the same day, the grand master and all the templars that were in Paris, and the several provinces of his kingdom. This order was executed on Friday Oct. 13th; and, at the same time, all their effects were seized and sequestered into the king's hands^b.

A

^a Tunc papa & cardinales venerunt Pictavim, ubi longiorem moram, ut dicitur, quam voluerent fecerunt, Rege Francorum & ejus complicibus & ministris illic eos quasi detinentibus violenter. Num papa, ut dicitur, sub alterius fictione personæ aliquando tentavit cum paucis summiariis tamen oneratis argento & auro præcedentibus, versus Burdegalam proficisci: Sed à quibusdam qui pro rege erant agnitus, cum rebus quas illuc volebat transferre, compulsus est Pictavim remeare. Prima vita Clementis V. ex Balusio p. 5.

^b Eodem anno in Octobri capti fuerunt omnes templarii una die in toto regno Franciæ, accusati de hæresi pessimâ, unde confisca 1307 sunt omnia bona eorum, quæ nunc tenet ordo hospitiorum & ipsi in carcere duo detinentur. Secunda vita Clementis V. auctore Ptolemæo Lucensi ordinis prædicatorum.

A STEP so extraordinary, caused a general surprise all over Christendom. Some ascribed it to the secret resentment which the king, who was revengeful in his nature, retained, as they said, against the templars, for having declared themselves in favour of Boniface VIII. during the differences between him and that pontiff. It was said likeways, that they had furnished the pope with considerable sums ; and to incense the king the more, they added, that a templar, treasurer to Philip, had been so faithleſs to his master, as to take the king's own money to assist his enemy with it out of the treasury, as may be seen in the sixth article of the accusations brought against them, and recited in the great chronicle of St. Denis, in the reign of Philip the Fair. Qu'eux reconnurent du thréſor du roi à aucuns avoir donné, qui au roi avoient fait contrarieté, laquelle chose étoit moult domageable au royaume. Meaning hereby, as Belleforest says^a, Boniface VIII. a mortal enemy to the king, and continually at variance with him.

OTHER historians, without going so far back as the king's difference with Boniface, pretend, that this prince, having debased his coin without lowering its value, to carry on the war against the Flemings, the templars, who found their interest touched by it, had been underhand the authors of a sedition raised on that occasion at Paris, or at least had fomented it by speaking it too freely against the person of the king. The people, who are always people, i. e. always discontented with the government, whatever it be, maintained, that there was no need to search for any other motive for the apprehending of the templars, than the avarice of that prince and his ministers, and their greediness to have the plunder of the immense riches of the order. Upon this occasion they cited the late example of the Jews, who were tolerated in the kingdom ; but Philip had, the year before, caused them all to be arrested in one day, as he had just served the templars ; and after stripping them of all their effects, had obliged them to depart the kingdom with their families, half

starved and naked, with only a poor pittance for them to subsist on in the road.

SOME warm persons, called likeways to mind what had passed in Italy at Anagni, the country and residence of Boniface VIII. whose treasure was plundered by some French and Italian adventurers, that the king maintained privately beyond the mountains, under the command of Nogaret and Colonna. They said the king had put into his own pocket the greatest part of this treasure, which was the richest in Christendom, either in gold and silver, or in diamonds and precious stones.

THERE is still in being an anonymous memorial of those times, which might induce one to suspect, that among the motives suggested to that prince, to engage him to push on the condemnation of the templars, there were some not altogether disinterested. As the design of abolishing the order was no longer made a secret in France, after the templars were taken up, one of that set of men who raise their own fortune on the ruin of that of others, proposed to king Philip the Fair, to institute and found a new order, by the name of the royal order, and to obtain a grant from the pope, to annex the great revenues of the templars to it; that the knights of Rhodes, and the knights of all the other military orders in Christendom, should be incorporated into this new order; that they should be all obliged to take the habit of it, and acknowledge the authority of one grand master general, who should be named for that purpose by the sovereign pontiff. To engage the king in this project, the author of the memorial proposed, that his majesty should enter into a treaty with all the other sovereigns that assumed the title of kings of Jerusalem, and get that title conferred on the king of Cyprus, who had neither wife nor children; and that this prince, being made grand master of the order, should take the habit, be professed, and declare Philip, second son to the king of France, his successor in the grand mastership, and the two crowns; which young prince, by this union of two crowns, joined to the immense revenues of all the military orders, would become one of the most potent princes of the

the east. The bait was like enough to go down with a king that had three male children^a.

BUT be the case how it will, with regard to the various motives that determined Philip the Fair to press the condemnation of the templars², we leave it freely to the reader to decide, whether he acted in this grand affair, out of a pure zeal for the preservation of religion, as is affirmed in the bulls of pope Clement V. or whether that prince did not proceed with so much heat against the templars, merely out of the principle of a gainful vengeance blended with avarice, as was given out by foreign writers, prejudiced perhaps, and enemies to France. I know not whether we are to ascribe the letters of Edward II. king of England, to this national jealousy; but as soon as that prince heard of the imprisonment of the templars in France, he wrote immediately to the pope, and most of the European princes, desiring them to give no credit to the calumnies spread abroad against those knights, who are, says he, reverenced over all England for the purity of their faith, the regularity of their lives, and their zeal for the defence of religion.

BUT notwithstanding this apology, it must be owned, that after the first age of the institution of the templars, a wordly spirit, luxury, and the delicacies and excesses of the table, had begun to infect several knights of that order. The old proverb of drinking like a templar, which after such a distance of time, is still kept up, shews what a character they had upon this article. 'Tis true, indeed, that the primitive valour and zeal of the old templars against the infidels, still distinguished themselves in the body of the order; but in most of its particular members, there was no longer to be found that spirit of religion, animated by a lively faith, which St. Bernard so highly extolled, nor yet that disinterestedness and Christian moderation which their predecessors preserved, even in the midst of the most glorious victories. That happy age once gone, a haughty

^a Louis Hutin, Philip the Long, Charles the Fair.

haughty deportment, which high birth is too apt to inspire, a fierceness which their valour gave them, and a certain domineering spirit, which great riches never fail to produce, made them afterwards pass for the proudest of men.

THE templars were accused of ambition, a fatal passion, which drew upon them afterwards the severity, and, if I may venture to say so, the unmercifulness of most of the bishops their judges, with whom both they and the hospitallers had formerly great differences, on account of their independence, and the privileges of their order.

THESE prelates, at the king's instance, and assisted by William de Paris, a dominican, the inquisitor general and confessor to that prince, called the prisoners before them to undergo their first examination ; and the famous William de Nogaret, so noted for the boldness of his enterprises against Boniface VIII. had likewise the management of this terrible affair.

THE pope was not a little surprised to hear of the imprisonment of the grand master, and all the templars in France, and he looked upon the proceedings of the bishops and inquisitor, as an encroachment upon his own authority. In the first heat of his resentment, he suspended the powers of William de Paris, and inhibited the bishops of France from taking any cognisance of this affair, which he reserved to himself. He wrote at the same time to the king, to complain of his imprisoning the members of a religious order, who held, as he said, of no superior but the holy see ; and told him, in a letter written with much spirit, that he had sent the cardinals Berenger de Fredole, and Stephen de Susy, and expected that he should immediately put both the persons and effects of the templars into their hands, or those of the bishop of Preneste his nuncio.

PHILIP answered him^z, that he had not caused them to be apprehended but upon the previous request of

^z Hist. de la condamn. des templiers par Dupuy, p. II.

of the inquisitor, an officer of the court of Rome, and appointed by the pope himself in his kingdom ; that the suspension of the powers of that dominican, and of those of the bishops, who by a right essential to their order, were judges in matters of doctrine, was very prejudicial to religion ; that the templars would not fail to make their advantage of it, and might upon this occasion flatter themselves with hopes of finding protection at his court. He complained in the next place of the pope's too great dilatoriness, in seconding him in so just a prosecution, and represented to him in terms which carried an air of reproach, that God abhorred nothing so much as the lukewarm ; that to be slow in punishing the crimes of the accused, was giving a kind of consent to them ; that instead of interdicting the bishops as he had done, the discharge of the essential functions of their dignity, he ought on the contrary to excite their zeal for the extirpation of so corrupt an order ; and that after all these prelates were called, as well as himself, to share in the care of the church of God. That prince, jealous of the rights of episcopacy goes on in these words : " It would be a cruel injustice, " most holy father, to these prelates, which God forbids, to inhibit them the exercise of a ministry, which " they have received immediately from him, and deprives them of the right they have to defend the faith. " Neither have they merited so unjust treatment, nor " can they suffer it, or we ourselves wink at it, without violating the oath we took at our coronation. " 'Twould be a most crying sin indeed to throw such " a contempt on those whom God has sent. For our " Lord saith, he that despiseth you, despiseth me. Who " then, holy father, continues this prince, is the sacrilegious wretch, that dares advise you to despise " these prelates, or rather Jesus Christ, who has sent " them ?' The king concludes this smart letter with some maxims and expressions that are still severer. He affirms, that the pope is subject to the laws of his predecessors^a, so far, adds he, that some have maintained,

that

^a Dupuy. *ibid.*

that the pope may be involved, ipso facto, in a canon or sentence passed on a matter of faith.

THIS letter, taken from the royal records of France, by Peter Dupuy, shews us how impatient the king was at the least delay in this affair. The conduct he had observed, in regard to pope Boniface, making his successor apprehensive of drawing upon his back a prince, resolute and incapable of ever desisting from what he had once taken in hand, Clement found himself obliged to yield to a temper, and relax somewhat of the formalities of law. The affair was accommodated by the endeavours of the two cardinals, and a good harmony restored between the spiritual and temporal powers. It was agreed, that the king should put the persons and effects of the templars into the hands of the pope's nuncio, which was executed immediately, tho' they were still guarded by the king's subjects.

BUT for form sake, and to please the pope, it was said, that they were guarded in his name, and in the name of the church. Much the same method was observed with regard to their effects, and the persons in whose hands they were deposited. Every thing indeed was administered in the pope's name, but among the administrators were William Pisdoue and Rene Bourdon, valets de chambre to the king^a; which shews plainly, that in this whole affair, there was nothing but the stile and form of the sequestration changed. The king, in return for so slight a satisfaction, required the pope to take off his confessor's suspension, and to allow that dominican still to assist in the prosecution and trial of the templars. " Though this be in contradiction to my own authority," says Clement, in one of his bulls^b, " yet I give the king my word, " since he will have it so, that the inquisitor shall be suffered to proceed with the ordinaries; but this upon " condition," adds the pope, " that no bishop shall examine any templars but such as are private members " of the order, and belong to his own diocese; and " that

^a Dupuy, p. 15.

^b Dupuy, p. 1.

" that those knights shall not be judged but by metropolitans, and in a council of each province : " and that none of those prelates shall take cognisance " of the general state of the whole order, or of what " relates to the person of the grand master, and principal officers of the order, the examination and judgment whereof I reserve, says he, to myself, and to " the holy see."

THE pope and the king being agreed, began in concert to carry on the prosecution of the templars. The prisons were crowded with these knights, who, excepting such as pleaded guilty, were all put to the most violent torture. Nothing was to be heard but the cries and groans of such as had their flesh torn off with burning pincers, or were broken and dismembered on the rack. A great number, to avoid such inhumane tortures, confessed at once all that was required of them; but there was also abundance of those templars, who, in the midst of the most horrible torments, maintained with an invincible firmness and obstinacy, that they were innocent. The different, and indeed contradictory manner, in which several authors have related these facts, has left posterity the most impenetrable piece of history that ever suffered by the malice or negligence of historians.

THE pope being minded to take cognisance of this affair, examined seventy two templars himself, who confessed themselves guilty ; and a knight of the order, who was also an officer of that pontiff's, owned to him, as he says, ingenuously all the inquiry he had discovered among his brethren. The pope, after this, ordered the grand master, the great priors, and the principal commanders of France, Gascony, Normandy, Aquitain and Poitou, to be brought before him. " We " have ordered them, says he, in one of his bulls, to " be removed to Poitiers, but some of them being sick " at Chinon in Touraine, so that they are not able to " travel on horseback, or to bear any other method of " conveyance whatsoever, we have appointed the cardinals Berenge, Stephen and Landulfe to take their

" exa-

“ examination.” ’Tis very probable, that those knights who could not be brought to Poitiers on horseback, or in any other manner, were such as had been broken on the rack.

THE grand master, as it is said, owned at Poitiers most of the crimes charged upon his order. There are some historians that say, he had made the like confession before at Paris, and in consequence of that had even wrote a circular letter to all his knights, exhorting them to imitate him in his confession and repentance. The commissioners of the holy see, at their return from Chinon, delivered the verbal process or report of this confession to the pope and the king. That prince was returned to Poitiers, to sollicit the more effectually the condemnation of the whole body of the templars, and obtain from the pope the utter extinction of the order.

BUT while they were taking their measures for this purpose, and laying the main stress of their proceedings upon the confessions of a great number of templars, they were surprized to hear, that most of those knights had recanted their confessions, and declared, they were extorted from them by force of torments ; that they openly detested the pardon which the king’s officers tendered them, and that they looked upon it as the price of falsehood and the scandalous recompence of a prevarication that was equally prejudicial to their honour and their conscience.

IN the mean time; the kings of England, Castile, Arragon and Sicily, the count of Provence, and most of the princes of Christendom, and even the archbishops of Italy, had, at the pope’s instances, caused all the templars in their dominions to be apprehended. Garrisons at the same time had been put into their commandries, all their effects had been seized, and continual preparations were making in all quarters to carry on the prosecution against them.

THE templars of Arragon took refuge immediately in some fortresses*, which they had built at their own expence

* Zurita, l. 5. c. 73.

expence to defend the country against the incursions of the Moors, from whence they wrote to the pope in their own justification. They remonstrated to him, that their faith was pure, and had never fallen under the least suspicion ; that they had often sealed the confession of it with their blood ; that great numbers of their brethren, at this very time, when they were so barbarously persecuted, were actually groaning under a grievous slavery among the Moors, who were daily offering them their liberty, if they would but change their religion; so that, say they to the sovereign pontiff, the templars, who are slaves to the infidels, are exposed to the most cruel tortures as being Christians ; and yet, at the sametime, Christian princes burn them as infidels : that if any of their order had acknowledged the commission of enormous crimes, whether they did so thro' a sense of guilt, or only to deliver themselves from the tortures of the rack, they deserved to be punished either as criminals, or as men that were base enough to betray their conscience, the honour of their order, and the sacredness of truth : but that a noble order, which for two ages had done such services to the church, ought not to suffer for the crimes of some particular members, and the weakness or prevarication of others. They add, that their great possessions were the true cause of the persecutions they suffered, and beseech the pope, that, in imitation of his predecessors, he would vouchsafe to honour them with his protection, or that they might be allowed to defend their innocence themselves with the point of their swords, according to the custom of that time, and the duties of knighthood, against such profligate wretches as should defame them.

It is not known what answer the pope made to their petition : we only learn from history, that James II. who was then upon the throne of Aragon, besieged them in the castles whither they were retired ; that he made himself master of those places ; that he appropriated them to himself, and sent the templars into different prisons, where the bishop of Valentia had orders from the pope to prosecute them.

PREPARATIONS were made at Paris for carrying on the like proceedings against them. Most of the prisoners were removed ^{*} thither; but their recanting the first confession they had made, and ascribing it to the violence of the rack, or the fear of torture, put the judges to a nonplus. A great consultation was held on this subject, and it was long debated, whether they should take any notice of their protestations. At last, by a very singular decision, it was resolved to treat all that had recanted their first confession as heretics relapsed, and as persons that had renounced Jesus Christ. Pursuant to this determination, the grand master de Molay was brought again before the commissioners. They asked him, if he had any thing to say in defence of his knights. He replied, that he would freely undertake their defence, and should be infinitely pleased to maintain the innocence of his order to the face of the whole world; but that he was an illiterate knight, i. e. he could neither write nor read, as was the case of most of the gentry at that time. He desired the liberty of having council, “ though, says he, they have not “ left me four deniers to defray the expence of such a “ prosecution.”

THE commissioners replied, that in a prosecution for heresy, the accused were never allowed the benefit of council, or the assistance of an advocate; that before he undertook this defence he would do well to consider seriously what he was about; that he ought especially to remember the confession that he had made himself at Chinon of his own crimes and those of his order: and then the confession was read over to him. Never was astonishment equal to that of the grand master. When he heard it read he made the sign of the cross, and cried out, that if the three cardinals, before whom

he

^{*} Eodem anno templarii omnes qui erant in regno Franciae mituntur Parisiis. Multi eorum reocant quod dixerant. Moveretur questio contra eos utrum talis revocatio posset dici relapsio, & iudicetur contra eos quod sic. Unde parisiis comburuntur quinque a quatuor, stantibus eis in proposito quod veri Catholici essent. Ex secunda vita Clementis V. pag. 37.

he had appeared at Chinon, and who had subscribed his examination, were of any other quality, he knew well what he should say. As the commissioners pressed him to explain himself more openly, being no longer master of his resentment, he added, that they deserved the same punishment that the Sarazens and Tartars inflict on liars and persons guilty of forgery, whose bellies, says he, they rip up, and cut off their heads^a.

YET it is plain, by the instruments and records of this prosecution, that before the meeting of Chinon, and in hopes of the impunity which the pope and king had promised him, he had, on two occasions, confessed part of the crimes laid to his charge. But it is probable, that the secretary or register, who drew up his confession at Chinon, had, to improve the charge, and render him more criminal, added several aggravating circumstances to it: perhaps too he had enlarged his confession with all the crimes which were in general imputed to the whole order, and to conceal the fraud, had not read it over to him.

BUT be that as it will; the grand master, without explaining himself more distinctly upon the subject of his confession, thought fit only to urge, that the pope had reserved to himself the cognisance of what related to him, and insisted upon being sent to him. He added, that with regard to his order, he should only mention three things in their favour: “ first, that, excepting cathedral churches, there was not one in all Christendom where divine service was celebrated with more devotion, or where there were a greater number of relicks, or richer ornaments. Secondly, That in all their commandries they gave a general alms thrice a week. Thirdly, That there was not any order or nation where knights and gentlemen exposed their lives more freely for the defence of Christianity, than the templars had always done” The commissioners told him, that all this was useless without faith. But he replied, that the templars be-

^a Dupuy, p. 42.

lieved assuredly all that the catholic church believed, and that it was to maintain this holy belief, that such a number of those knights had shed their blood against the Sarazens, the Turks and the Moors.

BROTHER Peter de Bologna, a priest, and procurator general of the order, represented to the commissioners, that promises of impunity, and threats of torments, had been equally made use of to obtain an acknowledgment of the crimes imputed to his brethren; that they had been told, that their order was tacitly given up already to destruction, and the pope was to abolish it solemnly in council. The letters patent, with the king's seal upon them, had been shewed to several prisoners, wherein, in case of their confession, they were promised life, liberty, and a pension, as long as they lived, and that such as could not be seduced by these promises, had been constrained by violent tortures: that it was much less surprizing, that frail men, to save themselves from torments, should speak according to the intention of those that tormented them, than it was to see such numbers of the templars endure with constancy the most dreadful tortures, rather than betray the truth: that many of these knights were dead in dungeons, of the tortures they had suffered on the rack, and he desired, that their executioners and jailers might be examined to give an account of the sentiments wherein they died, and declare whether it was not true, that they had persisted to the last gasp, when men have nothing more to hope for, or fear, in averring their own innocence, and that of their order in general. Then he besought the commissioners to summon before them a templar, called brother Adam de Valincourt, who had passed from their order to that of the Chartreux, out of a desire of greater perfection, but not being able to support the austeries of these latter, had petitioned to be again admitted into the order of the templars. He added, that the superiors and brethren of that knight, had looked upon his first change as apostasy; that they had obliged him, before they would receive him, to present himself at the door of

the temple in a white sheet ; that after his resuming the habit of the order, they had condemned him to eat upon the ground for a whole year, to fast upon bread and water on wednesdays and fridays every week, and to undergo the discipline every sunday from the hands of the priest that officiated. The procurator demanded, if it was probable, that this templar should return to them from the Chartreux, and submit to a correction and penance so long and austere, if he had discovered among his brethren of the order all the abominations that had been alledged to blacken their character; and insisted to be heard with his superiors, and the deputies of the whole society in a full council, in order, said he, to demonstrate our innocence to the face of all Christendom.

NOTWITHSTANDING this defence, they proceeded to pass sentence. Some were entirely acquitted ; others were condemned to a canonical penance, after which they were to be set at liberty. These were such as adhered to the confession of their faults, and had, to shew their abhorrence of the order, laid aside the habit, and shaved the long beards, which they wore in conformity to the custom of the eastern nations. The templars, on the contrary, who had revoked their first confession, and persisted in the protestations they had made of their innocence, were treated with excessive rigour. Fifty nine of them, among whom there was a chaplain of the king's, were degraded as relapsed heretics, by the bishop of Paris, and delivered over to the secular arm. They were carried out of the gate of S. Antoine and burnt alive at a slow fire. All of them, in the midst of the flames, called upon the holy name of God, and, what is more surprizing, there was not one of these fifty nine, that, to save himself from so dreadful an execution, would accept of the pardon which their relations and friends offered them in the king's name, provided they would renounce their protestations.

THERE were great numbers of them, in several other parts of France, that shewed the same firmness in the midst of the flames : they burnt them, but they could

never extort from them an acknowledgment of the crimes laid to their charge. “ A thing astonishing in-
 “ deed, says the bishop of Lodeve, a cotemporary hi-
 “ storian, that all those unfortunate persons, who were
 “ executed in the most terrible manner, gave no other
 “ reason for their retraction but the shame and remorse
 “ they felt, for having, through the violence of the
 “ rack, confessed crimes of which they pretended to
 “ be innocent .”

THE king, who had the affair of the templars exceedingily at heart, as the pope says of him, and the historians of that time agree, repaired to Vienna in Dauphiny at the time fixed by the pontiff’s bull, and came thither attended by Louis his eldest son, king of Navarre, in right of his mother, by Philip and Charles, brothers to that young prince, by Charles de Valois^b, and Louis count d’Eureux, their uncles and the king’s brothers. That prince appeared in this august assembly with a great court; others say, with a numerous body of troops, to shew his power, and command respect. There were present in the council above three hundred bishops, without reckoning the abbots, priors, and most famous doctors of Christendom.

THE first session was held the sixteenth of October, A. D. 1311, wherein the pope laid before them the three reasons for calling the council : 1. The affair of the templars. 2. The recovery of the Holy Land. 3. The reformation of manners, and of the discipline of the church. We shall confine ourself to what particularly concerned the templars, and the part which the knights of Rhodes came afterwards to have in this great affair.

IN the first place, the pope caused to be read, in full council, the proceedings carried on in several provinces,

^a Unum autem mirandum fuit, quod omnes & singuli eorum confessiones suas quas prius jurati fecerant in judicio retractarunt, dicentes se falso fuisse confessos, nullam super hoc reddentes caufam aliam nisi viam aut metum tormentorum quod de se talia faterentur. Ex secunda vita Clementis V.

^b Baluzius in vitis paparum Aveion.

ces, against different knights of the temple; and after this was over, he demanded of each of the fathers, in his turn, if they did not think it proper to suppress an order, wherein they had discovered such crying abuses, and such enormous crimes^a. An Italian prelate, addressing himself to the pope, pressed him to abolish immediately, and without any formality, an order, against which, he said, above two thousand witnesses had deposed in various parts of Christendom. But all the bishops and archbishops of the council, and the most eminent doctors, represented unanimously to the pope, that before he suppressed an illustrious order, which, from the time of its foundation, had rendered very important services to Christendom, they were of opinion, the grand master and principal persons of the order, ought to be heard in their own defence, as justice required, and they themselves had so earnestly requested in many petitions.

THE historians of that time tell us, that all the Italian bishops but one were of this opinion, as were also those of Spain, Germany, Denmark, England, Scotland and Ireland; that all the prelates of France also were of the same sentiment, except the archbishops of Rheims, Sens and Roan^b; so that in a council, composed of above three hundred bishops, there were but four that gave their opinion contrary to this motion; and, if I may venture to say so, contrary to the first principles of natural equity.

THE audience which they insisted on in favour of the accused very much perplexed the pope, who saw plainly what would be the consequence of it. What-
ever

^a P. Dupuy.

^b Interim autem vocantur prælati cum cardinalibus ad conferendum de templariis: leguntur acta ipsorum inter prælatos; & in hoc convenienter, requisiti à pontifice sigillatim, ut det templariis audienciam, sive defensionem. In hâc sententiâ concordant omnes prælati Italiae præter unum. Hispaniae, Theutoniæ, Daniæ, Angliae, Scotiæ & Hyberniæ; item Gallici, præter tres metropolitanos, videlicet, Remensem, Senonensem & Rotomagensem. Hoc autem actum est sive actitatum in principio Decembris. Ex secunda vita Clementis V. p. 43. Autore Ptolomæo Lucensi.

ever authority he was invested with, he was still sensible that it would be difficult for him to wave hearing them upon the various causes they had of exception, or to refuse the right of being confronted with their accusers, and the witnesses against them; proceedings which would all take up a great deal of time, and leave the issue of the prosecution uncertain.

THE affair was spun out to the length of six months, all that time being probably employed in conferences, and perhaps in secret negotiations, to persuade the prelates to dispense with the ordinary forms, in a matter that seemed plain enough already^a. At least, Alberic de Rosate, a celebrated lawyer, informs us, that upon the fathers of the council maintaining that they could not condemn the accused without hearing them, the pope cried out, that if they could not give a judicial sentence against the templars, for want of such a formality, the plenitude of the papal authority should supply every defect, and he would condemn them in a summary way, rather than offend his dear son the king of France^b.

ACCORDINGLY the pope, on the 22d of May, in the following year, having first, in a private consistory, secured the cardinals and several bishops, who, out of complaisance, came over to this side of the question, held the second session of the council with great solemnity, and therein dissolved and annulled the order of the templars^c. And though we could not, says he, in his sentence, give judgment in form of law, we condemn them by way of provision, and by our apostolical authority, reserving to ourself and the holy church of Rome, the disposal of the persons and estates of the templars.

THERE

^a Les meditations de Camerarius, v. 3. l. 5. c. 4. -

^b Et si via justitiae ordo ille destrui non possit, fiat tamen via expedientiæ, ne scandalisetur carus filius noster rex Galliæ.

^c Summus pontifex multis prælatis cum cardinalibus coram se in privato consistorio convocatis, per provisionem potius quam condemnationis viam, ordinem templariorum cassavit, & penitus annullavit. Quarta vita Clementis V. p. 85. Autore quodam Veneto coætaneo.

THERE was nothing wanting now but the determination of the council, in regard to the use and disposal of those great estates. The pope, who was apprehensive that most princes would, in their own territories, seize upon what lay convenient for them, represented, that these estates having been consecrated to the defence of the holy places, and the pilgrims that visited them, they could not put them to a better use than by giving them to the knights of Rhodes, who were devoted to those holy functions, and had lately given new proofs of their zeal and courage, by the conquest of the isle of Rhodes^a. But the partisans of France insisted loudly on the creation of a new order, and uniting the whole order of St. John to it. They said, that such an augmentation of the estates of those knights, would only serve to plunge them into the same irregularities, which had just occasioned the condemnation of the templars ; and that under colour of taking possession of them, they would be immediately dispersed all over Europe, and, it was to be feared, would adopt the pride, the haughtiness, the luxury and dissoluteness of the templars.

THE pope, who, by this creation of a royal order, and suppression of all others, saw they were going to withdraw all the military friars in Europe and Asia from under his authority, strenuously rejected the proposal ; and, to refute the reasons of such as were for it, he declared, that he would be answerable himself for reforming the order, both in its head and particular members, if such a reformation should be thought necessary ; that he would not suffer any knight to continue

^a *Priusquam concilium solveretur, post habitos tractatus varios de bonis templariorum, quibus vel ad quos usus essent potius applicanda, quibusdam conscientibus, quod nova religio, ad quam applicarentur esset fundanda, aliis alia dicentibus, tandem providit apostolica sedes, regibus & prælatis assidentibus, eadem in favorem Terræ Sanctæ integraliter ad fratres hospitales devolvi, ut ad ejusdem terræ recuperationem sive subsidium possent effici fortiores.* Contin. Guill. de Nangis, p. 646.

tinue in the west, excepting such as were old and infirm, and appointed to take care of the commandries; that he would cause an exact valuation to be made of the revenues of the order, that he might the better regulate the number of the knights, and the expence to be allowed for their subsistence, and that all the residue should be employed for the relief of pilgrims, and the defence of Christian states; all admirable projects, but they were never put in execution.

THE bare promises of this pontiff^a brought most of the fathers of the council over to his opinion; but the king of France seemed to come into this proposal with great reluctance. That prince, who was prejudiced against the hospitallers, insisted upon the pope's proposal for a reformation, and that proper measures should be immediately taken for that purpose; that the grand master and all his knights should be comprehended in it, and that they should be obliged to make themselves for the future as agreeable to the body of bishops as they had ever till then been opposite to them. Which may induce us to believe, that their ancient differences with the bishops of Palestine were well enough known in France. All the estates of the templars were adjudged to the knights of Rhodes, except such as lay in Spain, which, by a particular appointment, were to be applied to the defence of the country against the Moors, who were still in possession of the kingdom of Granada.

At length, after the dissolution of the council, and in the year following, came on the last act of 1313. this tragedy, in which the fate of the grand master, and dignitaries of the order, stiled the great preceptors, or the great commanders, was to be decided. The pope had reserved the cognizance of their case to himself, and in consideration of their confession, had promised them an entire impunity. But at his return from the council, whether he had changed his

^a See the letter of Philip the Fair to Clement V. dated August 24th 1312. Dupuy, condamnation des templiers, p. 178. & 179.

his sentiments, or was minded not to condemn them himself, he appointed two cardinals to sit as judges upon them, who, by his orders, repaired to Paris, and took for their co-assessors there the archbishop of Sens, and some other prelates of the Gallican church. These commissioners of the pope, ordered the *prevôt* of Paris to bring before them James de Molay, grand master of the templars, a dignity, says M. Dupuy, which put him on the level with princes, having, in that quality, had the honour of being godfather to one of the king's children. The second of these prisoners was Guy, brother to the dauphin of Viennois, sovereign prince of Dauphiny. The third was Hugh de Peralde; great prior or visitor of the priory of France, and the fourth was the great prior of Aquitain, who, before his imprisonment, had the management of the king's exchequer and revenues.

IT nowhere appears, from the instruments and records of this famous prosecution, that these prelates examined or interrogated them anew, or that they confronted them with witnesses. And though such a method of proceeding was according to the ordinary forms and course of the law, yet, it is probable, the commissioners were resolved to conform themselves to the conduct which the pope and council had observed before them. They contented themselves with the acknowledgment made by the prisoners before the pope and the king, of the crimes laid to their charge; and it was upon this acknowledgment, pursuant to the intentions of the sovereign pontiff, that the judges determined between themselves to condemn them only to perpetual imprisonment, in case they stood to their first confession. But as it was a matter of great consequence to calm the minds of the people, who were shocked at the vast number of fires that had been lighted up in the several provinces of the kingdom, and it behoved them above all things to convince the people of Paris, that it was with justice that so many templars had been condemned to be burnt alive, they required of these four last, who were the chief among them, to make a public and

and sincere declaration of all the abuses and crimes committed in the order, if they had a mind to save their lives, or expected that the pope and the king should keep their word with them. For this purpose, a scaffold was erected in the court before the cathedral church, and the sheriffs men and soldiers brought the prisoners upon it. Then one of the legates stood up, and opened the dismal ceremony with a discourse, wherein he enlarged upon all the impieties and abominations, of which, he said, the templars had been convicted by their own acknowledgment. And to leave the audience no room to doubt, he called upon the grand master and his companions, to renew, in the hearing of the people, the confession which they had made before the pope of their crimes and errors.

'TWAS in all probability to induce them to make this declaration, that on the one hand he assured them of a full amnesty, and on the other the executioners, to intimidate them, erected a pile of wood, as if they were to be burnt the moment that they revoked their confession.

THE priors of France and Aquitain, either out of sincerity or fear, at the sight of so dreadful a punishment, persisted in their first confession. But when it came to the grand master's turn to speak, that prisoner, shaking his chains, advanced, to their great surprize, with a countenance full of resolution, to the edge of the scaffold, and then raising his voice to be the better heard, "It is but just, cries he^a, that in this terrible day, and in the last moments of my life, I lay open the iniquity of falsehood, and make truth to triumph. I declare then, in the face of heaven and earth, and I own, though to my eternal shame and confusion, that I have committed the greatest of crimes; but it has been only in acknowledging those that have been charged with so much virulence upon an order which truth obliges me now to declare innocent. I made the first declaration they required of me, only to sus-

" pend

^a Villani, lib. 8. c. 92. Pap. Maff in Phil. Pulch. Sabeil. Aenead. 9. lib. 7.

" pend the excessive tortures of the rack, and mollify
 " those that made me endure 'em. I am very sensible
 " what torments they inflict, and what executions they
 " prepare for those that have the courage to revoke
 " such a confession; but the horrible sight they offer
 " to my eyes, is not capable of making me confirm a
 " first lye by a second. On a condition so infamous as
 " that, I freely renounce life, which is already but too
 " odious to me. And what good would it do to me to
 " spin out a few miserable days, when I must owe 'em
 " only to the blackest of calumnies^a."

HE would have gone on, but was interrupted. The brother of the Dauphin of Viennois, who came next, spoke after the same manner, and with the strongest asseverations, bore testimony to the innocence of his order. The legate, upon this occasion, did by no means gain the applause of the people, but he soon had his revenge. The grand master and his companions were brought down from the scaffold, and the *Prevôt* of Paris carried them back to the prison. The king, who was revengeful in his nature, and looked upon the destruction of the templars as his own work, being

VOL. II.

H

incensed

^a Sunt autores non obscuri, Jacobum Burgundionem, ordinis principem, cum productus ad supplicium, circumfusa ingenti multitudine, dum pyra extruitur, staret, proposita vita spe ac impunitate, si quae in custodiâ fassus de se suisque esset, nunc quoque confessus, veniam publicè peteret, hujusmodi verba fecisse, "Ego nunc supremis rebus meis, cum locum mendacio dari nefas sit, ex animo, verèque fateor me ingens in me mesque scelus confisse, ultimaque suppicia cum summo cruciatu premeritum, qui in gratiam quorum minimè decuit, dolcedineque vitae, flagitia impia, sceleraque, ad tormenta ementitus sum in ordinem meum, de religione Christiana optimè meritum. Nec mihi nunc vita opus est precaria & novo super vetus mendacio retentata."

Exin rogo impositum, ac admoto paulatim primoribus pedibus, ad exprimendam scelerum confessionem, ne tunc quidem cum reliquo corpore depasto vitalia fœdo nidore torrentur, ab hujus orationis constantia descivisse, aut mutatae mentis ullam significacionem præbuisse, neque ipsum, neque duos cum ipso suppicio affectos nobilissimos ejus ordinis viros, quorum alter esset Delphini Allobrogis frater. Paul. Emil. in Philip. Pulch.

incensed at this recantation of the chiefs of the order, caused them to be burnt alive the same day with a slow fire, in a little isle of the Seine between that prince's garden and the convent of the Augustines. The grand master, in the midst of that exquisite torment, shewed to his last moment the same firmness that he had done in the court of the cathedral, and expressed himself in the same manner. He repeated his protestations of the innocence of his order; but declared, that as to himself he deserved to suffer, for having averred the contrary in the pope and the king's presence. Mezeray tell us, that he had read an account of this affair, in which it is laid, that the grand master, when he had no other liberty left him but that of speech, and was almost stifled with the smoke, cried out aloud, "Clement, " thou unrighteous judge and barbarous executioner, " I summon thee to appear in forty days before the judgment-seat of God." Some writers say, that he summoned the king likeways to appear there within a year. Perhaps the death of that prince and the pope, which happened precisely within those terms, gave occasion afterwards to the story of this summons. The two great priors of France and Aquitain, ended their days in prison. But Paulus Æmilius says, that one of them was burnt with the grand master and the Dauphin of Viennois's brother; if so, it was in all likelihood, because he retracted after their example.

All the people shed tears at the tragical spectacle of these holy knights; and several devout persons, as Papirius Masson relates², gathered up their ashes, preserving them afterwards as precious relicks. As for the two wretches that were the authors of this dismal catastrophe, they perished miserably soon after. One was hanged for fresh crimes, and the other was assassinated by his enemies.

We do not pretend to draw any inference from these facts. There is too much variety in the ancient historians, and too much partiality in the modern, to be able

* Liv. 3. p. 392.

able to pronounce on either side with certainty. Among the latter, some complain, that the templars were accused and indicted for holding a criminal correspondence with Saladin, whereas, say they after the battle of Tiberias, that victorious prince cut off the heads of all the templars that he had taken prisoners, as may be seen in this history; which is hardly consistent with such a pretended correspondence.

NOR do they find any greater probability in the accusation brought against them of having sold the town of St. John d'Acre to one of Saladin's successors; since it is plain, from all the contemporary writers, that three hundred templars died in the defence of this place; that their grand master de Beaujeu was killed on the breach; and that there escaped out of the massacre, when the town was taken, only ten of his knights, who got into a bark, and sailed to Cyprus.

As for the sins against chastity, and such as nature itself abhors, these writers maintain, that no stiles ought to be laid on their confession; that, on the one hand, they were offered a general pardon, with the promise of life, liberty, and a good pension, and, on the other, they saw fires kindled to burn them; and that it is no wonder if frail men shrink, and are intimidated at the apprehensions of so terrible an execution.

OTHER historians of different sentiments maintain on the contrary², that it is impossible to reflect on the course of the prosecution, the infinite number of witnesses, as well templars as others, the quality of the judges, the agreement of the accusations brought against these knights in all the kingdoms of Christendom, the quality too of the persons guilty, the testimony of several foreign historians, the little inclination that the pope had at first to condemn them, and what passed in the council of Vienne; that it is impossible, I say, to reflect on the nature and number of these different circumstances, without being perswaded of the justice of their condemnation. 'Tis very probable, says Maria na the Jesuit, that they were not all innocent, nor yet

all guilty*. This is the judgment of that judicious historian, who observes, that the punishments inflicted on them seemed cruel to abundance of people, and that it was scarce probable, that these irregularities should have infected all the particulars of so large a body, dispersed over all Christendom, but that the extinction of so famous an order, ought to serve for an instruction to others of the same kind, and teach them not to depend so much on their riches, as on the practice of those virtues that are suitable to their profession, in order to avoid falling into the like misfortunes.

THOUGH the knights of Rhodes had no hand in this surprising revolution, yet since the universal church, assembled in the council of Vienne, had thought fit to bestow the estates and effects of the templars upon their order, the grand master did not think he ought to refuse them. For this reason he called a council, to consider what methods were proper to be used, in order to get possession of them; and it was resolved to send ample powers to such of the principal commanders in the west, as were noted for their capacity and prudence, to treat with the several sovereigns of Europe, about an affair of such importance, and which might be attended with great difficulties in the execution. For this purpose, the grand master and council drew up a formal instrument, in the nature of a procuration, wherein they declared, that being informed of the disposal, which the pope and the holy council had made of the estates of the templars in favour of the order of St. John, and that it was the intention of the church that these estates should be employed, as well for the convoy and defence of pilgrims, as for the recovery of the Holy Land, they had, by common consent, chosen brother Albert Lallemand de Chateau-noir, grand preceptor, or grand commander, whose wisdom and capacity the order had long experienced, to be procurator-general and lieutenant of the mastership in Europe; and that the council had thought proper to join in commission with him, brother Richard de Ravelink, draper; brother Philip

* Mariana l. 15. c. 10.

Philip de Grangana, prior of Rome; brother Leonard de Tibertis, prior of Venice, and procurator-general in the court of Rome; brother Henry de Mainieres; brother Arnald de Soliers, and brother Arnald de Chavaneuf, both companions or assistants of the grand master; brother Durand de la Prevôté, preceptor of Montchalix, and brother Sauveur d'Aurillac; and that the grand commander might use the assistance of all these knights, either jointly or separately, to go and take possession of the estates and effects granted to the order, to receive them from the hands of the administrators, and to give a good and sufficient discharge for the same.

'TWAS expressly mentioned in the same instrument, that the revenues of the order of St. John being considerably diminished, and the commandries for the most part in a declining condition, through the negligence of the preceptors and stewards; upon which account there was a necessity for a speedy visitation and an exact reform, as well in the priorial houses as in such as depended upon them, the council appointed the said brother Lallemand visitor, inquisitor, corrector, reformer, administrator and comptroller in ordinary of all the houses situate on this side the sea, as well of the ancient commandries of the order of St. John, as of those of the templars, which were to be consigned to them. That the commander should require an exact account of the revenues of the order, and of the use to which they had been applied, by the preceptors entrusted with them; that he had authority to prosecute all persons comprehended within his commission, of what dignity soever they were, to deprive the guilty of the commandries; substitute others in their places that were more worthy to fill them; remove the knights and serving brothers from one house to another; and even to send them to Rhodes if he thought fit. He was likewise empowered, by the same commission, to admit into the order persons of noble birth, and even yeomen, i. e. knights and serving brothers, to cloath them with the habit of the order; and in particular, to give the

military girdle to the knights; which plainly points out the distinction that was always made between the different members of this body; and it were to be wished, they had never confounded so just a distinction, by allowing the serving brothers to wear the golden cross, which can be of no other use but to debase the noblest branch of this illustrious order.

THIS instrument is dated at Rhodes Oct. 17th 1312, and we see at the head of the signatures, that of the grand master's, who styles himself brother Fulk de Villaret, by the Grace of God, and the holy apostolic see, humble master of the holy house and hospital of St. John of Jerusalem, and guardian of the poor of Jesus Christ. And underneath his signature, we find those of brother Thierry de Lorgne, marshal; brother Peter de Clermont, vice-hospitaller; brother Richard de Ravelink, draper; brother René de Dieu, treasurer; brother Philip de Grangana, prior of Rome; brother Martin-Pierre de Ros, prior of Messina, and Peter de St. John, preceptor of Achaea.

THE great commander and the other commissioners, in virtue of these powers, went into France to take possession of the effects and estates of the templars: but they met with great difficulties, says Rainaldi, to get these effects out of the gripping hands of some courtiers that had seized on them. The pope being informed of the various obstacles to the execution of the decree of the council, wrote, upon that occasion, to Philip the Fair, in the most pressing terms. That prince gave him a dry answer, viz. that he had never consented to make over the templars effects to the hospitallers, but upon his holiness's promise of endeavouring a necessary reformation of that order, both in its head and particular members; besides, that it was but just they should first reimburse themselves the necessary charges of the prosecution of that great affair, which he made to amount to the sum of two hundred thousand pounds; an immense sum for those times^a.

THE

* Cum ad hujusmodi consensum impatiendum una cum praetatis in concilio congregatis fuerimus per vos inducti, quia sanctitas

THE commissioners of the order spent a great deal of time, and were at infinite pains before they could force the secular administrators to quit their hold, who left no stone unturned to secure to themselves in property what had been committed to them only in trust. To get the commandries out of the hands of those leeches, they were forced to give them great sums of money ; which, says St. Antonine, drained the treasury of the order^a.

KING Philip the Fair dying after he had given the knights of Rhodes seisin of the estates of the templars^b, Louis Hutin, his eldest son and successor, demanded sixty thousand pounds more than his predecessor had done ; and to discharge this sum, brother Leonard de Tibertis, one of the commissioners that treated with him, was forced to consent, that he should keep in his hands two thirds of the money of the templars, the ornaments of their churches, the furniture and goods of their houses, all the profits and revenues of their lands, in a word, all their moveable effects, till the day that the hospitallers took possession of their estates. But this prince, and the king his father, were not the only persons that got by this rich plunder : there are some historians that say, the pope had a good share of it^c.

CHARLES II. king of Naples and Sicily, and count of Provence and Forcalquier, acted much after the same manner in the dominions which he had in France. A great number of templars, who would not own the crimes charged upon them, were burnt there. As for their

tas vestra disposuerat & ordinaverat quod per fidem Apostolicam sic dictorum hospitaliorum ordo regularetur & reformaretur, tara in capite quam in membris. Dupuy, p. 179.

^a Quia jam fuerat occupata à diversis Dominis laicis, opportuit quod illi de hospitali magnum thesaurum exponerent in dando regi & aliis qui occupaverant dicta bona ; unde depauperata est mansio hospitalis, quæ se existimabat inde opulentam fieri. Ant. p. 3. t. 21. ch. 3.

^b Traité entre les gens du roy & les hospitaliers, Dupuy, p. 184.

^c M. Dupuy, p. 59.

their estates, M. Dapuy tells us, that the immovable effects were left to the hospitallers^a; but as for the moveable ones and money, they were confiscated and shared between the pope and this prince. But it appears that the king of Naples deferred, as long as he lived, to put the hospitallers in possession of the castles situate in that kingdom, and in Sicily. For history has conveyed down to us a letter of Clément's, wherein he exhorts king Robert, Charles's successor, to follow the example of Philip the Fair, and give up readily the possession of the landed estates that had formerly belonged to the templars; whence we may conclude, that Philip had made over those in his hands to the commissioners before he died. But the difference about the charges was not ended till the reign of his successor, as we have observed before.

THOUGH the pope, at the instance of the kings of Aragon, Castile, Portugal and Majorca, had by his bull excepted all the estates of the templars within the dominions of those princes, out of the grant made by the council of the possessions of that order to the hospitallers; yet, as he was apprehensive that these sovereigns might, upon one pretence or other, seize those estates, he issued out a new bull, excommunicating all persons of the kingdom of Majorca, that did not, within the space of one month, deliver up the commandries of the templars to the knights of Rhodes. In consequence of this bull, and to avoid incurring the censures of the church, Sanchez James, sovereign of the Baleares, put the hospitallers in possession of all the estates of the templars. But whether the bull was designed only for this prince, to whom probably the pope had directed it, as being the weakest, or whether the other Spanish sovereigns did not seem disposed to submit to it, the king of Arragon took no notice of it, and ordered his ambassadors to tell the pope, that he hoped the design of appropriating the estates of the templars to the order of the hospitallers, would not extend to his

^a Nostradamus histoire de Provence, an. 1307.

his dominions, which he desired might be exempted from it ; and that he had been obliged for the defence and security of his subjects, who were continually infested by the Moors, to seize upon seventeen commandries of the templars, which were so many fortresses, to put troops in them for their defence, and to take at the same time into his hands the revenues annexed to them, to provide for the subsistence and pay of those garrisons.

NOT but the knights of Rhodes were as capable of maintaining themselves in these places, and of defending the frontiers, as the templars were : but it is plain, from the whole conduct of the Spanish princes in this affair, that their secret view was to have the plunder of the templars to themselves, without any regard to the right of the hospitallers, and not to suffer those great estates to be enjoyed by an order that was under a foreign head and grand master, and pretended likewise to hold under no superior but the holy see.

BUT be that as it will, after many negotiations and conferences, which lasted near five years, a treaty was at last concluded, by the mediation of pope John XXII. successor to Clement V. between brother Leonard de Tibertis, procurator-general of the order, and Vitalis de Villanova, the king of Arragon's minister, by which the knights of Rhodes not only desisted from their pretensions to the estates of the templars, situate in the kingdom of Valentia, dependent on the king of Arragon, but resigned likewise to the pope all the particular commandries of their own order in that kingdom, except the single commandry which was in the town of Valentia, and the castle called the Torrent, which the order of St. John reserved to themselves. All the other commandries, as well those of the hospitallers as the templars, and all the estates of both those orders, situate in the kingdom of Valentia, were afterwards, at the request and instances of the king of Arragon, granted by the pope to the order and knights of Calatrava, who fixed their chief seat at Monteza ; and in exchange

for

for this, it was declared by the treaty, that except the seventeen fortresses of the templars on the frontiers, which the king had seized into his own hands, the knights of Rhodes should be put in possession of all the other commandries and estates that had belonged to the templars, as well in Arragon as in Catalonia. This rendered the knights of Rhodes so powerful in that kingdom and in Catalonia, that the castellan of Emposta, being not sufficient for so vast a charge, the grand master and council were obliged to create a great prior for that principality. If we recollect what has been said in the beginning of this work, concerning the rights and just pretensions that the hospitallers and templars had to the crown of Arragon, in case of a vacancy for want of lawful heirs, we can't sufficiently admire the good policy of brother Leonard de Tibertis, who by this treaty, upon the uniting of the rights of both orders in that of St. John alone, took care to have them supported by forces lying near enough together, and able to make them good whenever an opportunity offered.

As the pope's design in disposing of the templars estates in favour of the hospitallers did not suit the secret views of Denys king of Portugal, that prince made use of an honourable pretext to get the start of the pontiff. He instituted a military order, which he called the order of Christ, and annexed to it the estates 1318. of the templars in his dominions. After this settlement, he sent ambassadors to Rome, to demand of pope John XXII. a confirmation of this new order of knighthood, which the pope granted.

FERDINAND IV. king of Castile, did not take so much precaution; and though the templars had been declared innocent in a council held at Salamanca^a, this prince made no scruple to seize on their estates, and annexed to his demesnes considerable cities which had belonged to them, and had been granted by the pope to the knights of Rhodes.

THE

^a Zurita, l. 5. c. 101.

THE conduct which the kings of Castile, Arragon and Portugal, have observed since, with regard to these new military orders, most of them founded out of the ruins of that of the templars, shews, that the apprehensions of the popes Clement V. and John XXII. were not altogether groundless. For the successors of those princes found out a way afterwards to annex the four grand masterships of the orders of St. James, Calatrava, and Alcantara, and of Christ, to their own persons, by the title of perpetual administrators, which brought them in immense revenues. To make the religious knights of these Spanish orders some sort of amends, they obtained from the court of Rome, in their favour, the liberty of marrying, and of leaving off the regular habit, which they were obliged to wear, and of using in its stead a plain cross of gold, with colours agreeable to the ancient colour of their religious habits.

EDWARD II. king of England, acted in a more noble and disinterested manner with regard to the order of St. John. The templars, besides a considerable commandry which they had in London, enjoyed likewise immense estates in all the counties of that kingdom, and the prior of London sat in parliament as first baron of the kingdom. Edward, being informed that the pope and council had substituted the knights of Rhodes in the room of the templars², ordered his officers, by his writs, the originals of which are still preserved in the tower of London, to deliver up the possession of their estates to brother Albert de Chateaunoir, or l'Allemand, great commander, and first in the commission appointed by the grand master and council, to receive them, in conjunction with brother Leonard de Tibertis, prior of Venice, and procurator-general of the order at the court of Rome. That prince, by other writs still preserved in the same place, commands all sheriffs to aid and assist in the execution of his orders, to use all their authority in behalf of the procurators of St. John and to cause, not only the estates in land,

but

² Walsing. in Edw. II. p. 99.

but the fruits and corn, the produce thereof, to be delivered to them : a proceeding, that shews this prince would take no share of the spoils of the templars to himself, to the prejudice of the knights of Rhodes.

As for Germany, the historians of that nation relate, that pope Clement V. having sent the bull of abolishing the order of the templars, to the archbishop of Mentz to publish it, that prelate summoned all his clergy together, in order to do it with the greater solemnity ; and that they were strangely surprized to see the waltgraff, or count Sauvage, one of the principal of the order, enter into the assembly, attended by twenty other templars, armed under their regular habits ; and that the archbishop, either out of a charitable disposition, or a natural sense of fear, received them very obligingly. They add, that the archbishop proceeded so far, as to invite the count to take a seat in the assembly ; that the count, on the other hand, declared to him, that he was not come to do violence to any body whatsoever ; but, that being informed that he was directed to publish a bull of the pope's against their order, he insisted, that the appeal which they made from that decree to the next council, and the successor of Clement, should be received, read and published. The archbishop, to elude this demand, answered, that he would consider of it ; but the templars pressed him so warmly, that the archbishop, not thinking it proper to deny men whom he saw armed, and in a passion, caused their appeal to be read publicly. He sent it afterwards to the pope, who ordered him to have it examined in a council of his province ^a. Accordingly a synod was called, and after various formalities, which were there observed, the templars of that province were declared innocent of the crimes charged upon them.

NEVERTHELESS, as this grand order was at length wholly extin^bt, we are not particularly acquainted with what

^a Mutius in Chron. l. 22. p. 211.

^b Serrarius in Chron. Nogunt. l. 3. p. 850.

what became of their estates in Germany. All that appears from the historians of that nation, is, that the knights of Rhodes, and the Teutonic knights shared them between themselves. 'Tis very probable, that these two military orders made afterwards, by way of recompence, mutual exchanges of some of their ancient commandries; for the Teutonic knights are actually in possession of the commandry of Margat, which the Germans call Mergentheim, and the French Mariendal, though it is evident from history, that the hospitallers were the founders of it; some German hospitallers, after the loss of the old Margat situate in Palestine, having built it on the same model, and given it the name of Margat, or Mergentheim, which signifies, the house of Mary, to preserve the memory of a place, which after the loss of Jerusalem, was made the chief residence of the whole order.

The End of the Fourth Book.

T H E
H I S T O R Y
O F T H E
Knights Hospitallers

O F

St. JOHN of JERUSALEM,

Styled afterwards,

The K N I G H T S of Rhodes,

And at present,

The K N I G H T S of M A L T A.

B O O K V.

THE conquest of the isle of Rhodes, and the confiscation of the great revenues of the templars, raised the military order of St. John to a degree of grandeur equal to that of many FULK DE SOVEREIGNS in Europe. Among the se-VILLARET. veral islands called Sporades, this of Rhodes was the most considerable, both in regard of the fertility of its soil, and of the safety of its ports and roads, which drew commerce and plenty to it from all parts : besides, after the knights became masters of it, galleys and ships, well equipped, were sent out from time to time, to give chace to pirates, and the knights that commanded those squadrons

squadrons enriched themselves with the prizes which they took continually from the infidels.

BUT these different sources of riches, so advantageous in a state purely secular, weakened insensibly a religious order. Its temporal power, carried to too great a length, was the occasion afterwards of its weakness, and the great revenues, especially of particular knights, introduced among the youngest of the order luxury, effeminacy, and pleasures.

THESE military religious, upon the return of their caravans, and after their cruizing, spent in play, and often debauchery, what they had acquired in war, and what they ought, by their profession, to have put into the common treasury of the order. In vain did the old commanders, educated in severe morals, and in an exact practice of the rules of the order, represent to them, that the templars had been lately ruined by the like conduct : this libertine set of youths, proud of the reputation they daily gained in engagements, scarce vouchsafed to give any attention to that terrible and recent example. These young untractable gentlemen flattered themselves, that their valour would supply all the virtues of their profession ; and what was still more deplorable, the grand master himself seemed, by his example, to authorise so strange a change in the morals of his order.

VILLARET, blinded with the glory he had lately acquired by his conquests, was unable to support too prosperous a fortune ; he was eager to enjoy the fruit of his labours, and surrounded, as he always was, with a croud of flatterers, he spent his days in an inglorious sloth : delicacy^a and profuseness prevailed at his table : all the perils of the sea must be tempted to provide him

^a Desciverat a pristina virtute hospitalaricrum equitum princeps Villaretus, captaque Rhodo, non ad proferendum Christi cultum in Syriam extulerat mentem, sed in delicias abjecerat : praeteritisque insolescens victoriis, intentusque privatæ rei, publicas curas spernebat : quo circa equites, communicato inter se consilio, cum opprimere ex infidiis aderti sunt. Rainaldi ad ann. 1317. n. 35.

the most exquisite dainties, and the most delicious wines ; and to supply his luxury and extravagance, he applied to his own use the revenues of the vacant commandries, or else, to the prejudice of the most ancient knights, he gave them away as a recompence to his favourites, and the ministers of his pleasures. With regard to the other knights, he affected to render himself difficult of access ; and if he vouchsafed them any audience, 'twas always in a rude and haughty manner. The way of remonstrance was shut up to the justest complaints, and scarce a knight went from his palace, but with a secret indignation.

WHAT heightened the discontent of the whole body, was his neglecting to pay the debts of the order ; and they complained he let the house, the head of the order, want subsistence and necessaries. In vain did the old commanders represent to him, that the order was never richer, nor the maintenance of the religious more neglected ; the imperious grand master received these remonstrances as so many reproaches. His conduct, his manners, and the form he was for introducing in the government, were those of an absolute sovereign ; and he seemed to make no distinction between the knights themselves, and the inhabitants of the island, and other subjects of the order. But he had a great body of gentry to oppose him. Many of the knights, being descended from the best families of Christendom, and brought up in republican principles, were ready to submit to an authority founded upon laws, but were incapable of bearing an odious despotic power.

THE way of private remonstrances not succeeding with a superior so proud and haughty, those knights, who pretended to have been any way injured, had recourse to a regular prosecution. The grand master, upon their petition, was summoned judicially to appear in council, to give an account of his administration : he rejected the summons with disdain. The malecontents were not at all discouraged at it : they assembled secretly together, to consider of the measures they were to take. Brother Maurice de Pagnac, under colour of deliver-

delivering the order from a tyrannical sway, was put at their head. He was an old commander, pious, exact in the observance of his rule, but bitter in his zeal, and from his own regularity assumed a sort of right to condemn all the knights that were not as devout as himself. This commander, who was naturally rigid and inflexible, and besides, had probably his own private views in the revolution he was bringing about, represented to his brother companions, that after having had in vain recourse to petitioning, and the authority of the laws for redress, they were going infallibly to fall under an open tyranny, if they did not take the bold resolution of arresting the grand master ; that this attempt, daring and extraordinary as it might appear, would, if it succeeded, be infallibly approved by the knights, even by such as were most indifferent in the case ; and if they were once masters of his person, they might impeach and try him before the council. This proposal, tho' violent in its nature, was but the more agreeable to persons whose passions were raised, and whose resentments ran high ; but there were great difficulties in the execution. The principal and wisest commanders, tho' discontented with the government, had not yet engaged in these disputes ; and the grand master, besides his household, which was numerous, never stirred abroad without a train of his creatures, and a herd of flatterers, who without troubling themselves about what is right or wrong, always devote themselves to the author and source of favours.

THE malecontents, to surprise him at a time when he had the fewest attendants about him, endeavoured to bribe one of his valets de chambre, and offered him a great sum of money to let them by night into his apartment ; but the servant, faithful to his master, informed him of the proposal that was made him ; and to heighten his own zeal and fidelity, exaggerated the number of the conspirators, and the danger he was in of being seized. The grand master, fearing he could not be safe in the city, went out, under pretence of hunting, and made the best of his way to the castle of

Lindus, of which he took possession. This castle is seated on a hill in the eastern part of the island, about seven miles from the city of Rhodes. Besides a good port which is at the foot of the castle, there is on the north a large bay, with a clean, firm, and sandy bottom; and a little farther off there is a place called Trianda, or the quarter of Serpents; below which is a very good road, where vessels may ride covered from the east and south-east winds. Villaret being master of this castle, supplied it with troops and provisions, and at the same time had gallies in the port by his orders always equipped and ready to take him on board, if he was too hard pressed by his enemies; and to stop the proceedings begun against him, he notified to the council, that he appealed to the holy see from every thing they should enact in his absence to the prejudice of his person and dignity.

BUT his flight, and especially the manner in which, by his single authority, he had seized on a strong place, and on the gallies belonging to the order; the troops which he had thrown into the place; those which he was actually levying in the island; and the arms and ammunition he was gathering on all sides; this so exasperated the minds of the knights, that the greatest part of them, even such as were the most moderate, and had not declared themselves before, joined the malecontents. 'Twas like a general conspiracy against the grand master; they all unanimously cried out against the tyrant: and in despite of his appeal to the holy see, a majority of the knights assembling in a tumultuous manner, deposed him, elected Maurice de Pagnac in his stead; and from this precipitate election there arose an unhappy schism in the order.

THE most disinterested knights thought themselves obliged to notify it to pope John XXII. successor to Clement. They had already prepossessed that pontiff about the ill use that Villaret made of the revenues of the order, and particularly with regard to his negligence in acquitting the principal and interest of the money

money that he had borrowed for the enterprise of Rhodes.

THE commanders were the more concerned in this negligence, in that the interest was paid at their expence, and out of their responsions, which were considerably enhanced thereby. The pope, before he made any determination about so surprizing an event, sent Bernard de Moreze prior of St. Caprais, and Bolo-
lo his chaplain, as his commissioners to Rhodes, to receive information of the truth of what had passed in this commotion.

THE instructions given to these commissioners were, that as soon as they arrived at Rhodes, they should suspend the power of the two grand masters, and should signify to them the expres order of the holy see, to appear both of them forthwith at the pope's court ; that they should notify immediately to all the knights, that in the interim, whilst this great affair was deciding, the pope, as superior paramount of the order, named brother Gerard de Pins to govern it. He was an old knight, of the language of Provence, of the same family as the grand master Odo de Pins, much esteemed for his valour and wisdom ; and not caring to declare himself for either party, was equally respected by both. The pope in the same instructions ordered the commissioners to seize the money, jewels, and all the effects of Villaret, to draw up an authentic account, and an exact inventory of them, and have it signed by the principal persons concerned ; and that after this previous formality, they should remit the whole into the treasury of the order, to be employed only in paying the bankers of Florence, and all other persons who had advanced the money necessary for the conquest of Rhodes.

THE two commissioners arriving in the island, executed the orders given them with great exactness. They cited the two pretenders to the court of Aviguon, and having made the commander de Pins to be acknowledged as lieutenant general of the grand mastership, they communicated to him a particular order given them by the pope in relation to the grand commandry of the

isle of Cyprus. That benefice, by the extent of its territory, its jurisdiction, and the largeness of its revenues, was rather a principality than a simple commandry. The castle and town of Colossus was the chief place of that seignory, which comprehended several villages, with the castle and town of Curias, otherways called Episcopia, which had been formerly the residence of the ancient kings of the isle. Villaret, by way of acknowledgment for the pains brother Albert l'Allemand de Chateaunoir had taken for recovering the possessions of the templars, had gratified him with that rich commandry, a dignity after that of grand master, and the most considerable of any the order had in all the east. Complaint was made to the pope, that the grand master had, out of favour to the commander l'Allemand, taxed it only at thirty thousand besans d'or (a gold coin valued at twenty one sols three deniers) responcion a year, whereas all the commanders before had paid sixty thousand, by which we may judge of the revenue of that rich commandry. The pope consented, that the lieutenant de Pins should leave the commander in possession of that dignity, upon condition he would pay to the treasury of the order the same reeived rent of sixty thousand besans ; but if he made any difficulty of so doing, he ordered, that upon his refusal, they should dispose of the commandry to one of the oldest knights, who would comply with exactly paying the the quit rent upon the ancient foot.

IN the mean time the two grand masters, in obedience to the pope's orders, set out for Avignon. Villaret was received wherever he passed, and particularly by Robert king of Sicily, as a great captain, and with all the good treatment that his reputation deserved : every one was touched with his disgrace : nor was his reception less favourable at Rome. Pagnac, his rival and competitor, saw plainly that the change of place was no way to his advantage ; they spoke of nothing at the pope's court, but of the valour and conquests of Villaret ; whereas himself was looked upon as a rebel, and a ringleader of malecontents.

THE pope * gave them both several audiences, not only in private, but also in the public consistory. The most famous lawiers of the court of Avignon were employed in this great affair. Edward Dupont, an eminent lawier, pleaded in favour of Pagnac's election : he represented, that the knights who composed what they called at Rhodes the Convent, having, in consequence of the right they had, and of the opinion they entertained of the virtue of Villaret, raised that knight to the dignity of grand master, they thought they had good grounds, when they saw him abuse his power, to resume an authority which that lawier maintained they had only committed to him in trust, and during such time as he should use it well. He insisted particularly on the power of the council which had concurred in his degradation, and which he would have been regarded as the representative body of the order, and of a general chapter.

VILLARET's lawier, after a fine harangue on the exploits and conquests of his client, so much to the glory and advantage of the order, and even of all Christendom, demanded, if the deposing of him was the recompense he ought to expect for them ; and if a company of mutineers and rebels could be ever authorised to depose their chief and superior, especially after he had prevented so rash an enterprise, by an appeal to the holy see. And in answer to what Pagnac's lawier had advanced about the sovereign authority of the council, as the representative body of the general chapter, he exclaimed aloud, that the condition of the grand masters would be very unhappy, if burdened, as they were, with the toilome cares of the government, they were to have nothing but the fatigue and inquietudes of it, whilst the members of the council, like a set of Ephori, should set up themselves for rigid judges and censors of their conduct. Yet let it be considered, says the lawier, that it is the grand masters themselves from whom the knights hold the dignities which give them a seat in council ; and whether it be fitting that

the

* John XXII.

the fate of chiefs should depend upon their creatures, and that they should be obliged to tremble before the work of their own hands.

THOUGH these reasons in a republican government were more pompous than solid, yet the pope, offended at the little regard that Pagnac's party had shown to the appeal of Villaret, inclined secretly to his side. The cardinals, and particularly the courtiers, who never fail to find out the dispositions of their master, blamed openly the precipitation with which they had deposed the grand master. Pagnac saw plainly, thro' the discourses spread on this subject, that he should never obtain a confirmation of his election. The fear of seeing it vacated, by a solemn judiciary sentence, and the sad idea of falling thereby again under the power of a mighty and incensed enemy, threw him into a deep melancholy : he quitted the court and retired to Montpelier, where he fell sick, and after languishing for some months, had there a period put to his life and ambition.

His death delivered the pope from the trouble of pronouncing a judicial sentence in so delicate an affair. The pontiff, to preserve always a subordination, began with re-establishing Villaret in all the functions of his dignity ; but as he had observed a vast deal of resentment and animosity in the contrary party, before he took off the suspension which his commissioners had signified to the grand master, it was agreed privately with him, that after he had resumed the government of his order, for a certain limited time, he should make a resignation, as of himself, to the holy see, and be provided with a great priory, which he should enjoy with an entire independence on his successor, and even without being obliged to contribute to the charges and responsibilities of the order ; which, after several changes of priories and many difficulties, was at last entirely finished about A. D. 1323. Villaret, after his abdication, retired to the castle of Teiran, which belonged to one of his sisters. He died there four years afterwards, and in A. D. 1327, his corps was interred in the church of

great

great St. John at Montpelier, in a marble tomb, round which there is an inscription ^a mentioning his quality, without taking notice of his abdication.

WHILST the order was infested with these divisions, Orchanes or Urcham Gazi, son and successor to Othoman, thought it a favourable juncture to drive the knights out of the isle of Rhodes. This young prince, in the life of the sultan his father, had a great hand in his conquests. He was the ablest of his generals, and the most certain instrument of his victories. The sovereign power to which he arrived, upon the death of Othoman, served only to inflame his courage. He was always revolving new conquests in his mind : he passed all the seasons of the year in the field, living with his soldiers in his camp like one of themselves, and as if they had been his brethren or his children ; and in the greatest dangers he shewed them a confidence that was equally honourable to the prince and his troops. His capacity was not at all inferior to his valour. Few sovereigns ever equalled him in the art of setting the princes his neighbours at variance. He never failed to declare himself for the weaker side against the stronger, the more easily to crush both at last. 'Twas by this policy, rather than the valour of his troops, that he made himself master of Mysia, Lycaonia, Phrygia and Caria. out of which he drove most of the petty princes, who had shared with his father Othoman the territories of the last sultan of Iconium of the Selgeucidian race, their master and sovereign.

THE nearness of the isle of Rhodes, which is only separated from Caria by a pretty narrow channel, determined him to attempt the conquest of it. He thought himself so sure of it, upon the advice he had received of the divisions in the order, that he resolved to transport

^b Anno Domini M.CCC.XXVII. die scilicet primá Septembris, obiit nobilissimus dominus frater Folquetus de Villareto, magister magni hospitalis sacræ domus sancti Joannis Baptistæ Hierosolymitani, cuius anima requiescat in pace, Amen. Dic pro me Pater noster, Ave Maria.

port thither in person a colony of Mahometans, Turks, Arabians, or Saracens ; and they 1321. pretend^a, that he chose for this purpose most of the families which the knights, upon the conquest of Rhodes, had drove out of the island ; and who, under the protection of the sultan, sheltered themselves with re-entering into possession, and settling again in it. Orchanes left the old men, the women and children, in the little isle of Episcopia, which he made himself master of in his way ; he then stood away with his fleet toward Rhodes. They relate, that he had no less than fourscore flutes, brigantines, or flat-bottomed vessels of different bulk, most of them laden with land forces, with which he intended to form the siege of the city of Rhodes.

GERARD DE PINS, before mentioned, whom the pope had made lieutenant-general of the whole order, having advice of the design of this infidel prince, and that his great armament was intended against Rhodes, did not think it proper to expect the enemy in the island. Unluckily most of the gallies and vessels of the order were out a cruising ; there were only four gallies left in the port, with some frigates, flutes, and merchant ships, but they were fortunately joined by six Genoese gallies, which put into the port of Rhodes, in their return from the coasts of Cilicia and the lesser Armenia, where they traded. All the knights that were in the island, the soldiers, and even inhabitants, able to bear arms, were put on board this little fleet. The commander de Pins mounted on board the admiral, and as he was an excellent seaman, getting the wind of the Turks, he attacked them boldly. The infidels were superior in number of vessels ; they had the like advantage in the land forces which they had on board, but they were all soldiers, altogether unfit for sea engagements. The knights, on the contrary, inured to that way of fighting, worked their ships with so much skill, that they sunk part of the enemy's frigates and flat bottomed vessels, and took a great number

^a Giovan. Villani. 118.

ber of prisoners. Orchanes was only beaten by fancying himself invincible through the number and valour of his troops ; but he had only tried them upon land, and he found enemies at sea, whose capacity and skill were superior to all his forces. The general of the order having routed their fleet, made a descent in the isle of Episcopia, where, as we said before, Orchanes had landed a great number of Turkish families, which he designed for peopling the isle of Rhodes. The Christian general, to cut off this root of war, and take from these infidels (the old inhabitants of Rhodes) all hopes of re-establishing themselves there, put to the sword all that he found in arms, and the old men, women and children were, by his order, sold for slaves.

As the grand mastership was vacant by the abdication of Villaret, the pope conveened, in his palace in Avignon, the priors and knights that were at his court, or in the provinces near Avignon: and when they were arrived, he exhorted them to concord, and to sacrifice their private resentment to the general good of the order. All these knights shut themselves up afterwards in a sort of conclave, to proceed to the election of a new grand master; and after invocation of the Holy Ghost, and a mature deliberation, the choice of the assembly fell upon brother HELION de Villeneuve, whom the pope favoured openly; and his recommendation, very little different from an order, had a great influence in the election, which he confirmed afterwards by an authentic bull, bearing date A.D. 1323. Others pretend, that this confirmation was a mere nomination, derived from the sole authority of the pope.

HELION
DE VIL-
LENEUVE.

THE new grand master was not ungrateful; and to show his acknowledgement to the pontiff, he sold him some houses which the order possessed in the city of Cahors, and some large estates in land, in the adjacent parts, which the pope, a native of that city, made a purchase of in favour of his family, which he had a mind to raise out of the obscu-

rity it was buried in. His father, whose name was Arnaud d'Ossa or Deusse, was but a poor cobler. The merit of his son, and his extraordinary knowledge in civil and canon law, raised him to the dignity of cardinal. That dignity did not make him forget the meanness of his birth; he lived with the other cardinals as with his masters, sober, frugal and modest; one could hardly, even by his dress, distinguish any marks of a dignity, which appeared entirely indifferent to him. Such was this cardinal at the death of Clement V. The cardinals were two years before they could agree on the person they would chuse pope. They at first assembled at Carpentras; but the cardinals of Aquitain, tired out with the length of the conclave, got their servants to set fire to it, upon which they dispersed, and could not afterwards be got together again. Philip, count of Poitiers, brother to Louis Huitin king of France, having, by address, and under various pretences, drawn twenty three of them to Lions, engaged them to shut themselves up in a conclave; but as the factions were still as warm as ever, and they could not agree, they resolved at last, if we may believe Villani and St. Antonin, to refer themselves by way of compromise to the sole nomination which cardinal d'Ossa would make of a pope; out of a persuasion that so good a man, so disinterested, and one who, in the midst of all the cabals had always remained neuter, could not but make a good choice. But the candidates and heads of parties were strangely surprised, when the cardinal, by virtue of the power they had conferred upon him to chuse a pope, named himself, and with a clear, strong, and audible voice, pronounced these words, *Ego sum papa, 'tis I that am pope.* Yet, as the compromise was made in all the requisite formalities, they were obliged to acknowledge him, and at the ceremony of his coronation he took the name of John XXII. 'Tis thus that the historians above recited relate this event, though the emperor Louis of Bavaria, his enemy, and the partizans of that prince, in the writings which they published afterwards,

wards, with so much virulence against this pontiff, never reproached him with this fetch, the result of so refined an ambition.

THE grand master was too much devoted to this pope to quit his court in haste. He staid there, or in the neighbourhood, near four years. During that time, in order to remedy some abuses that had crept into the order, he called a general chapter at Montpelier. It must be owned that the grand master Villaret had done much less injury to the order by his profuseness than by the looseness he occasioned in the regular discipline. Upon annexing of the great revenues of the templars to the order of St. John, most of the knights were invested with commandries. These new commanders, those especially which abode in Europe, applying themselves to find out the ancient possessions of the templars, or else to make the most of them, dispensed with themselves, under favour of the divisions that then reigned in the order, from residing at Rhodes, and even from paying that obedience which they owed to the grand master and the council. Most of them attached themselves either to the court of Rome or to that of their particular sovereigns; and these loose religious courted the protection of secular princes, to make use of it as a succour and protection against the orders of their lawful superiors, and particularly to excuse themselves from residing at Rhodes, in the chief house of the order, which appeared to them no better than as a place of banishment.

THE chapter saw with grief, that a military order, founded and established in the Holy Land and in the east, was dispersed and buried as it were, in different commandries in Europe; and, to draw the knights from thence, and bring them back to their principal house, declared all incapable of any dignity of the order, who had not kept an actual residence there for a certain number of years; during which residence, they must likewise have served in the wars, and on board the vessels of the order. As to the grand crosses, and knights who were invested with the principal dignities of the

order, the chapter named eight conventional bailiffs, who were in that quality to have seat in the council, of which the grand master was the head and president, by a right inseparably annexed to his dignity. Yet he had but one voice more than any other counsellor or pilier, as they are called even to this day. By this nomination, the bailiffs were obliged to reside at Rhodes.

THEY maintain that this was the chapter in which they divided the body of the order into different languages or nations, and annexed particular dignities to each language, and fixed the commandries of each nation; which commandries were likeways distributed between the priories whereon they depended.

1329. It was resolved likeways, that the grand master should every ten years have the nomination of two vacant commandries in each priory, preferably to the course of each language which was beginning to be settled; and that every prior, after the language was filled up, might name once in five years to a vacant commandry in his priory, provided he had made the necessary improvements, and owed nothing to the common treasure of the responsions of his district; as may be seen in the treatise of the government of the order, which will be published in the last volume of this work.

THE grand master, after the conclusion of this chapter, prepared to set out for Rhodes, and was come as far as Marseilles, where he was to embark, when he was detained by a long and dangerous illness, which held him near two years, as we learn from a letter of the pope in the sixteenth year of his pontificate. In

1332. fine, the grand master having recovered his strength, embarked with a great number of knights, and arrived happily at Rhodes about

A. D. 1332.

THAT island, by the divisions risen in it, and by the long stay that the grand masters had made in France, was much declined in its power and strength. Most of the commanders had, under different pretences, re-

tired

tired to their respective countries and commandries. The want of pay had greatly weakened the garrison of the city, and there were breaches in several places of the walls. The grand master was no sooner landed, but he made in person an exact visit of all the out-works of the place ; he caused reparations to be made in all places that wanted them, and the city and whole island were indebted to him for a bastion or bulwark which he built at his own expence before one of the suburbs. To this precaution he added that of a numerous garrison, which he maintained constantly at his own expence, besides a great number of knights, which his presence, and yet more his benefactions, drew to Rhodes.

He observed the same conduct in respect to the isles and other places that depended on Rhodes. Commissioners well qualified for the office visited them by his order, and provided for the fortifying of such places as might be insulted ; and the grand master sent knights, eminent for their valour and experience, to command in these islands, who, by signals or light barks, gave him notice of whatever appeared in those seas. The navy of the order, under so vigilant an head, recovered its ancient reputation ; and besides the squadrons of the order, the principal and richest commanders fitted out gallies at their own expence. The corsairs durst appear no more ; and the island of Cyprus, and the lesser Armenia, whose coasts were often infested by those pirates, were freed from them by the protection of the flag of St. John.

If the Christian states in the neighbourhood of these knights derived such advantages from their vicinity, the inhabitants of Rhodes itself, and especially the poor, felt the more immediate effects of the grand master's care. Under so wise a government, there was not an unhappy person to be seen in all the isles of the order. The poor did not want a necessary subsistence. The sick were put in a large and magnificent hospital, where all the assistances necessary, either for the wants of the body or for those of the foul, were abundantly

provided for them. The grand master had re-animated the zeal of his knights by his own example ; and it may be said, that as long as he lived, he discharged perfectly well the functions, and justly merited the title of guardian of the poor, which had been annexed to his dignity, ever since the foundation of the order.

'Twas out of the same spirit of charity, and from the like and prudential motives, that he forbade all the knights, on pain of degradation, to offer to fight the serpent or crocodile, a sort of amphibious animal, which lived and fed in the marshes, and on the sides of the rivers. This crocodile was of a monstrous size, did a vast deal of mischief in the island, and had even devoured some of the inhabitants. For the understanding so extraordinary an incident, which some authors have treated as fabulous, we shall barely relate what history acquaints us with on that subject, and leave the reader to judge of so extraordinary an event, according to his understanding, and the probability he may find in our narration.

THE haunt of this furious animal we are speaking of, was in a cavern seated on the edge of a marsh at the foot of mount St. Stephen, two miles from the city. He went often out to seek his prey. He eat sheep, cows, and sometimes horses, when they came near the water and edge of the marsh. They complained likewise that he had devoured some young shepherds that were keeping their flocks. Several of the bravest knights of the convent, at different times, and unknown to each other, went singly out of the city in order to kill him, but none of them ever came back. As the use of fire arms was not then invented, and the skin of this kind of monster was covered with scales that were proof against the keenest arrows and darts, their arms, if we may so speak, not being equal, the serpent soon dispatched them. This was the motive which engaged the grand master to forbid the knights attempting any more an enterprise that seemed above all human strength.

THEY

THEY all obeyed him, except one knight of the language of Provence, named Dieu-donné de Gozon, who, in breach of this prohibition, and without being daunted at the fate of his brother companions, formed secretly the design of fighting this voracious beast, resolving to perish in it, or deliver the isle of Rhodes. This resolution is generally ascribed to the intrepid courage of the knight ; tho' others pretend, that he was likewise pushed on to it by the stinging invectives with which his courage had been insulted at Rhodes ; because having gone several times out of the city to fight the serpent, he had contented himself with taking a view of it at a distance, and had thereby employed his prudence more than his valour.

WHATEVER were the motives that determined the knight to try this adventure, he, to begin the execution of his project, went into France, and retired to the castle of Gozon, which is still standing in the province of Languedoc ; and having observed that the serpent he had a mind to attack had no scales under the belly, he formed the plan of his enterprise upon that observation.

He caused a figure of this monstrous beast to be made in wood or pastboard, according to the idea he had preserved of it, and took particular care to imitate the colour of it. He afterwards taught two young bull dogs to run when he cried out, and throw themselves under the belly of that terrible creature, whilst himself mounted on horseback, clad in armour, with his lance in his hand, pretended at the same time to strike at it in several places. The knight spent several months using this exercise every day, and as soon as he found his dogs perfect in this way of fighting, he returned to Rhodes. He was scarce arrived in the island, when, without communicating his design to any body whatsoever, he made his arms be carried privately near a church situated on the top of the mountain of St. Stephen, where he came attended only by two servants, whom he had brought from France. He went into the church, and after recommending himself to God, took

his

his arms, mounted on horseback, and ordered his servants, if he perished in the combat, to return to France; but to come up to him, if they perceived he had either killed the serpent, or was wounded himself. He then went down the mountain with his two dogs, advanced straight to the marsh, and the haunt of the serpent, who, at the noise that he made, ran with open mouth and eyes darting fire to devour him. Gozon gave it a stroke with his lance, which the thickness and hardness of its scales made of no effect. He was preparing to redouble his stroke, when his horse, frightened with the hissing and smell of the serpent, refuses to advance, retires back and leaps aside, and would have been the occasion of his master's destruction, if he, with great presence of mind, had not thrown himself off. Then taking his sword in his hand, and attended by his two faithful dogs, he immediately comes up to the horrible beast, and gives him several strokes in different places; but the hardness of the scales hindered them from entering, and the furious animal, with a stroke of his tail, threw him on the ground, and would infallibly have devoured him, if his two dogs, according as they had been taught, had not seized the serpent by the belly, which they tore and mangled with their teeth, without his being able, tho' he struggled with all his strength, to force them to quit their hold.

THE knight, by help of this succour, gets up, and joining his dogs, thrusts his sword up to the hilt, 1342. in a place that was not defended by scales: he there made a large wound, from whence a deluge of blood flowed out. The monster wounded to death, tumbles on the knight and beats him down a second time, and would have stifled him by the prodigious weight and bulk of its body, if the two servants who had been spectators of the combat had not, seeing the serpent dead, run in to the relief of their master. They found him in a swoon and for some time thought him dead; but having with great difficulty drawn him from under the serpent, to give him room to breathe, in case he was yet alive, they next took off his helmet, and after throwing a little water upon his face, he at last opened his eyes.

The

The first spectacle, and the most agreeable one that could offer itself to his sight, was that of seeing his enemy slain, which was attended with the satisfaction of having succeeded in so difficult an enterprise, in which many of his brother companions had lost their lives.

No sooner was the fame of his victory and the serpent's death proclaimed in the city, but a crowd of inhabitants thronged out to meet him. The knights conducted him in triumph to the grand master's palace; but in the midst of their acclamations the conqueror was infinitely surprised, when the grand master looking upon him with indignation, demanded of him, if he did not know the orders he had given against attacking that dangerous beast, and if he thought they might be violated with impunity. Immediately this strict observer of discipline, without vouchsafing to hear him, or being moved in the least by the intercessions of the knights, sent him directly to prison. He next convened the council, where he represented, that the order could by no means dispense with inflicting a rigorous punishment on so notorious a disobedience, that was more prejudicial to discipline, than the life of several serpents would have been to the cattle and inhabitants of that quarter of the island; and like another Manlius, he declared his opinion was, that the victory should be made fatal to the conqueror. But the council prevailed, that he should be only deprived of the habit of the order; in short, the unfortunate knight was ignominiously degraded, and there was but a short interval between his victory and this kind of punishment, which he found more cruel and severe than death itself.

BUT the grand master, after having by this chastisement performed the obligations due to the perservation of discipline, returned to his natural temper, which was full of sweetness and good nature: he was pleased to be pacified, and managed things in such a manner as to make them intreat him to grant a pardon, which he would have sollicited himself, if he had not been at the head of the order. At the pressing instances made him by the principal commanders, he restored him to the
habit

habit and his favour, and loaded him with kindnesses : all this was not to be compared to the unfeigned praises of the people, who dispose absolutely of glory ; whilst princes, how potent soever they be, can only have the disposal of the honours and dignities of the state.

THEY set up the head of this serpent or crocodile over one of the gates of the city, as a monument of Gozon's victory. Thevenot * in the relation of his travels, says, that it was there in his time, or at least the effigies of it ; that he himself had seen it there ; that it was much bigger and larger than that of an horse, its mouth reaching from ear to ear, big teeth, large eyes, the holes of the nostrils round, and the skin of a whitish grey, occasioned perhaps by the dust which it gathered in course of time.

WE shall be less surprised at so extraordinary an incident, if we reflect, that the isle of Rhodes was antiquely called Ophiusa, from the Grek word ὄφις, which signifies a serpent, from the great number of those reptiles which infested that island. Hyginus a Greek historian relates upon the testimony of Polyzelus a Rhodian, that a Thessalian, son of Triopas, or of Lapithas according to Diodorus Siculus, having been thrown by a storm upon the coast of Rhodes, happily exterminated those mischievous animals ; that Phorbas among the rest killed one of them of a prodigious bigness, which devoured the inhabitants. The learned Bochart pretends, that the Phœnicians called this island by the name of Gesirath-Rod, i. e. the isle of Serpents ; Gesirath, according to that author, being a term common to the Phœnicians, Syrians, Arabians and Chaldeans, for signifying an island, and Rod in the Phœnician tongue, signifying a serpent ; so that joining these two words together, they formed that of Gesirath-Rod, whence the Greeks afterwards made that of Rhodes, which the isle has preserved to this day. But without dwelling upon a point of antiquity so very remote from us, perhaps such as have criticised upon this passage of the modern

* Edition de 1637.

modern history of the iſle of Rhodes, have not conſidered a like event that happened in Africa, whilst Attilius Regulus commanded the Roman army there, and was making war againſt the Carthaginians ; and I do not think it foreign to my ſubject, to give an exact relation of what the historians of that nation tell us of a ſerpent ſtill more monſtrous and terrible than that killed by the knight de Gozon.

THE Roman army, ſay theſe writers, was encamped in Africa near the river Bagradas. The ſoldiers going to the water were attacked and devoured by a ſerpent which hindered them from coming near it. He had swallowed up ſeveral with his dreadful mouth ; others were killed with the lashes of his tail, and ſeveral died merely by the infection of his breath. In a word, he gave ſo much trouble to Regulus, that that general was obliged to employ his legions againſt the monster, to try which ſhould be maſter of the river. But as the ſerpent, by reaſon of the hardness of his ſcales, was impenetrable to all the javelins of the ſoldiers, they had recourse to their military engines ; they besieged him as they would have done a fortress ; they hurled ſtones and flints againſt him at a diſtance ; at laſt, after abundance of fatigue and sweat, a ſtone of extraordinary ſize, thrown from the ſtrongest machine, ſtruck him by good fortune, broke his back bone and killed the terrible monster.

REGULUS, as great a general as he was, ſay theſe historians, did not think the ſkin of this monſtrous animal unworthy of being ſent to Rome : it was a hundred foot long, and they hung it up in a temple, as a monument of his victory, and it remained there till the Numantine war. Thus it is that Florus, Valerius Maximus, Orosius, Aulus Gellius and Zonaras relate this matter.

I do not maintain that there has been no exaggeration in the length of the African ſerpent, nor affert every thing that is told of the monſtrous bulk of the crocodile of Rhodes ; but what appears certain from the historians of that time, from tradition, and even from

from inscriptions and authentic monuments, is, that Gozon killed a terrible animal, and by that action acquired a great reputation, especially with the people of Rhodes, who looked upon him as their deliverer.

THE grand master, to make him some amends for the mortification he had given him, conferred rich commandries upon him : he took him afterwards to be near his person, and finding a prudence in him equal to his bravery, he made him at last his lieutenant general in the government of the island ; from an opinion he had that so valiant and resolute a knight, who had exposed his life so generously for the safety of the inhabitants of the isle, would, in case of war or surprise, defend them better than any body else against all the attempts of the infidels.

THOSE Barbarians, informed of the forces and vigilance of the grand master, and discouraged by the ill success of their arms, left off their usual roving and pillaging for a time. Rhodes and the other isles of the order enjoyed a profound peace for several years. This security proved in the end prejudicial to the order : they fitted out fewer vessels ; their sea affairs were neglected ; most of the knights, finding no employment for their arms, returned into their own country ; and several commanders, those especially of the kingdoms of the north, under pretence of this apparent calm, neglected to pay their responses. This disobedience arose from the expence these commanders made in their provinces. Most of them kept little correspondence with the chief house of the order : they seemed to look upon themselves as proprietors of their commandries, and instead of the novices and private knights which every commander was obliged to maintain in his house, and educate in the spirit of the order, nothing was seen but a worthless crowd of valets and hunting equipages. The relations too of the greatest part of these commanders often consumed the bread of the poor, and the revenues appointed for the defence of the Christian dominions.

THE people who used to see their predecessors live like true religious, were soon scandalized at a life so entirely secular. Some good men complained of it to pope Benedict XII. who had lately succeeded John XXII. They represented to him that the hospitallers, by inheriting the immense revenues of the templars, had like them fallen into luxury, and been infected with the dangerous and contagious corruptions that arise from great riches ; that whilst the templars subsisted, the emulation between these two military orders engaged them both to vie with one another in armaments and enterprises always useful to Christianity ; but that since the extinction of that order, the commanders of the order of hospitallers, whose thoughts were taken up with their pleasures, seemed to shun danger, and neglected the convoy and defence of the pilgrims that went out of devotion to the holy Land. Some secret enemies of the hospitallers, or rather some greedy courtiers, such as are always grasping at other people's substance, and bent upon enriching themselves, proposed to the pope, to resume the estates of the templars out of the hands of the hospitallers ; others less self-interested were of opinion, that they should be employed in the foundation of a new military order. The pope, without entering into these different projects, to re-animate the courage of the hospitallers, designed to bring them into a league he was forming against the Turks, who were growing every day more formidable ; but his death, which happened a little time afterwards, prevented the execution of his project.

SOME African corsairs having at the same time made descents upon the coasts of the isles of Cyprus and Candia, and ravaged those of the Archipelago, which were less able to make a defence, furnished occasion for new complaints against the hospitallers. They represented to Clement VI. successor to Benedict XII. that the Christians of the Levant were abandoned as a prey to the infidels, whilst most of the knights being retired in the west, either upon their commandries, or at the courts of Christian princes, were taken up with

nothing but their pleasures, or the care of amassing wealth ; and that the grand master and the knights that continued with him at Rhodes, secured from the insults of the Barbarians by the fortifications of the place, lived in an utter indifference of what passed at sea. What gave weight to these complaints and murmurs of the public, was, that some chaplains, religious of the order, and some of its Esquires or serving brothers, had sent secret memorials to the court of Avignon against the grand master and the knights, complaining, that in midst of the luxury and effeminacy wherein they lived, they were not ashamed to let them want cloaths, and the necessary sustenance of life. The pope teased with these complaints, wrote about them to the grand master in sharp and reproachful terms.

" WE are informed, says the pontiff to him, by persons of merit and distinction, that it is the common sentiment of the clergy, and indeed of all the Christian world, that you and your brother companions scarce make any good use of the immense estates you possess, as well on this side as beyond the sea. Those who have the administration of them ride, say they, fine horses, make good chear, are richly dressed, are served in gold and silver, keep abundance of dogs and hawks for hunting and game, lay up great treasures, give little alms, and neglect the defence of the Christians, especially of those beyond sea. For this reason it has been under consideration, whether it would not be proper for the holy see to institute a new military order, and endow it with part of your revenues, in order to raise and keep up a laudable emulation between the two orders, as there was formerly between you and the templars: this however we have not yet thought fit to put in execution, out of the just confidence we have that you will immediately restore the antient discipline, and make a general reformation of manners in your order."

THE pope in the same letter adds, that he had advice, the Turks were making great preparations for the conquest

quest of all Romania. 'Tis not clear, whether by that term he meant only the province which bears that name, or whether, according to the Turkish and Arabian use of the expression, he comprehended under that name all the states which composed at that time what they called in the east the Roman empire ; an enterprise, says the pontiff, which would draw along with it the utter ruin of the Christian religion. The pope added farther, that in order to prevent so terrible a calamity, he had formed the plan of a naval armament, composed of the gallies of several princes, that should keep the sea, and might join and act in concert, either to hinder the descent of the Barbarians, or to carry succours to such places as should be attacked ; that the king of Cyprus had agreed to furnish for his quota four gallies, and the republic of Venice five ; that he ordered the knights of Rhodes to put six to sea, and the holy see would maintain four. " Though, " says the pontiff, we have had remonstrances made us by several of our brethren the cardinals, that your order was rich and powerful enough, not only to save the holy see the charges of this armament, but also to put a whole fleet to sea at their own expence ; and that there was in your treasury more gold and silver than could be found in that of any Christian prince whatever, without reckoning the considerable sums which your priors and commanders are scraping together for themselves." The pope concluded this letter with telling the grand master, that the church was but sorrowly edified with the particular enmities of the knights between one another ; adding at last, that complaints had been made to the holy see that they were negligent in providing for the subsistence of the chaplains and serving brothers.

THO' the grand master saw plainly they had imposed on the pope's zeal for religion, by the exaggeration made of the riches of the order, yet, like a true religious, he resolved to obey. They fitted out immediately six gallies in the port of Rhodes ; and for their maintenance and expence, he, by the advice, and in

concert with the sovereign council, appropriated a particular fund, arising from the succession of commanders deceased, viz. the rights of mortuaries and vacancies. The mortuary, as is practised even now, was levied upon the revenues of the commandry, from the day of the commander's decease till May first next ensuing, and from that day the vacancy commenced, and held till May the first of the following year; before that time the new commander could not enter upon the enjoyment of the revenues of the commandry.

THE grand master and council made afterwards several regulations for the reformation of manners, especially in respect to the provinces of the west. The knights were among other things forbid to wear cloth that cost more than two florins a canne, a measure which in several provinces of France contains two thirds more than the ell of Paris. And by the same regulation they were forbid the use of delicious wines, and the having more kind of meats than one on the same day: a wise and useful discipline; and happy it were for the order, was it to be revived in our days.

THREE^a visitors were appointed to carry these regulations to the pope, to desire him to add or retrench as he should see fitting, and invest the commissioners which they sent with his apostolical authority, that they might be in a condition to inforce a more exact observance of them.

THE pope was exceedingly moved and affected with the grand master's ready obedience; and to show the like generous care of the common cause, he fitted out the four gallies that he was to furnish for his quota, to which those of the king of Cyprus, the order of St. John and republic of Venice joined themselves, under the general command of a Genoese captain, Gingarria by name. This little fleet kept the sea all the summer, but without attempting any thing answerable to their strength,

^a Odo de Montaigu prior of Auvergne, Esnard d'Albarno prior of Capua, Peter Plantin prior of the church.

strength, and the expence the allies were at for this armament. The Genoese general, more mindful of his interest than his glory, made use of his authority to load the gallies with divers sorts of merchandize, and employed the money confided to him for the charges of the campaign, to his own private advantage. Henry, titular patriarch of Constantinople, legate of the holy see, mounted on board the admiral galley, and in that quality had the supreme command, according to the politics of the popes, who always assumed it in those wars that were raised for the sake of religion. This prelate, in imitation of the Genoese general, acted more like a merchant than a delegate of the sovereign pontiff. The year following, the allies, full of indignation against the Genoese, chose for their general brother John de Biandra, knight of Rhodes, prior of Lombardy, who had the particular command of the gallies of the order.

THE new general formed a design worthy of his valour. The port of Smyrna, a considerable city of Anatolia, served often for a retreat to the Turkish corsairs who were masters of the city. Biandra having, besides the soldiers on board his fleet, taken in at Rhodes a great number of troops commanded by valiant knights, formed the siege of the place and took it by storm. Some historians pretend that he took only the castle, which was seated by the sea side, and commanded the entrance of the port. All the soldiers in the fort both Turks and Arabians, were cut to pieces. The grand master having advice of it, knowing the importance of that fortress, sent fresh troops immediately thither, with arms and provisions to reinforce the garrison. There are still to be seen upon the gates of the castle, tho' fallen to ruin, the arms of the church, which were placed there as a monument of this conquest, the whole honour of which they ascribed to the pope, as head of the league, tho' the knights of Rhodes had the greatest share in it. A Turk called Morbassan, who commanded in the higher town and over all the country, attempted a year after to drive the Christians

out of the place. He laid siege to it, but after three months spent in smart attacks and a gallant defence, he made a feint of abandoning his enterprise, or at least of turning the siege into a blockade. The greatest part of his troops drew off, and only a small number was left in his camp. The Christians having notice of his retreat, made a furious sally, easily forced the intrenchments, which were ill defended, broke into the camp, and put to the sword or took prisoners all that made resistance, or did not save themselves by a speedy flight. They celebrated this victory upon the same spot on which they had obtained it, with the sound of military instruments, with feastings, and a joy which was so much the more dangerous as the enemy was not far off.

MORBASSAN, whom they fancied a great way up in the country, but who only lay concealed with his troops behind the neighbouring mountains, having notice of it by certain signals, marched down, and finding the Christians in disorder, made a cruel slaughter of them in his turn. The greatest loss fell upon the knights of Rhodes: and the pope's legate who was come into the camp to partake in the public joy, lost there his life, as well as most of the officers and ecclesiastics of his household. The knights who escaped the fury of the Barbarians got back to the fort, and held it out, by help of a new reinforcement, against all the efforts of the Turks and other infide's.

THE dismal news of this disgrace, passing into Europe, the pope to repair it published a crusade with all the indulgences annexed to the first. Humbert II. Dauphin of Viennois, pressed with great earnestness to be declared the chief and general of it. He was a prince of mean parts, naturally vain, inconstant in his projects, and less affected with their solidity, than the lustre and distinctions with which they were attended. He came in person to the court of pope Clement VI. to sollicit this employ. In the petition which he presented on that account to the sovereign pontiff, he intreated him to grant him the “ post of captain of this

“ holy

" holy expedition against the Turks, and all that were
 " not loyal to the church of Rome, which all people,
 " as well hospitallers as others, were obliged and bound
 " to obey by sea and land."

To engage the pope to grant him the generalship, he offered to maintain at his own expence in this war three hundred men of arms, a thousand cross-bow men, to furnish five ships of war well equipped, and to bring with him twelve banners and a hundred knights: glaring promises ! but as much beyond his ability, as the post of general of an army was above his experience and capacity.

SOME^a cardinals of the pope's council, who were not prepossessed in favour of this prince's courage, were against his demand; but the sovereign pontiff's inclination prevailed and carried with it all the voices.^b Humbert was chose general of the Christian army; the pope gave him the oath, and he obliged himself at the same time, by a solemn vow, to spend three whole years in that holy expedition. But as for the mighty armament that he was to furnish by sea and land, it was all reduced to an hundred men of arms; and there was no difficulty in judging of the success of the expedition by the choice of the general. The next day, being the feast of Corpus Christi, he received from the pope's hands the cross and standard of the church, which he had carried before him in the streets of Avignon, with his own particular standard a-breast; thus followed by a numerous retinue, he returned in great pomp to his house; a ceremonial, which in default of a solid glory, gratified the vanity of the man. The great busines\$ was to find out funds to supply the expence of so long an expedition.

The

^a Matt. Villani Hist. l. 2. c. 26. pag. 19. Edit. de Flor.

^b Et quia inter cæteros principes habui (providere de aliquo duce & capitaneo exercitui agminis Domini Dei Israel) repperi instantem sæpius, supplicantem humilius, optantem ardentius, offerentem liberalius, dilectum filium Imbertum Dalphinum Viennensem, hic præsentem : idcirco ipsum de fratum nostrorum consilio ducem & capitaneum contra Turcos exercitus duximus deputandum. Baluz, in Not. ad vit. Paparum Avenion, pag. 890.

The dauphin had recourse to an extraordinary impost, which he laid upon all his subjects ; and then prepared for his departure with the prince's Mary des Baux his wife, who, during the time the dauphin was at sea, retired to the city of Rhôdes and there died.

NOTWITHSTANDING all the disgraces that had happened to the Christians in the holy Land, expeditions beyond sea were still as frequent as ever ; and what rendered the enterprise more easy, was that for a sum of money agreed on with the masters of ships, they never wanted vessels in most of the ports of the Mediterranean ready to put to sea, and provided with all necessaries either for navigation or for fighting.

THE dauphin having bargained for four of these ships at six hundred fifty florins each per month, embarked at Marseilles the second of September, on board this little hackney squadron, which carried him first to Venice, the place of rendezvous for all persons engaged in the crusade. He went from thence to the isle of Negropont, where four vessels of the pope's, one of Rhodes, and another of Venice joined him. The prior of Lombardy, at his arrival, retired on board the gallies of the order, taking on himself the particular command of that squadron : 'tis believed the dauphin passed the winter in that island. The year following he was at sea with the whole fleet of the crusades, and contributed to make the Turks raise the siege of Caffa, a town at that time belonging to the Genoese ; and the Christian fleet having had some other advantages over that of the infidels, this the dauphin was not a little proud of. The pope foreseeing that the war could not be carried on with success, without providing for the crusade the funds necessary to defray the expence of it, had recourse to an extraordinary tax, which he laid upon all ecclesiastical revenues in the kingdoms of France, Spain, and England. But the bloody war made by the English at that time in France, and the loss of the battle of Crecy^a, where

^a Memoires de Pilati, Hist. de Dauphiné, act. 284.

where seventeen hundred and sixteen French knights were slain, not allowing the raising of this money, the pope fearing that the charges of the crusade would fall entirely upon himself, very gladly embraced the project of a truce with the infidels, which the dauphin proposed to him.

THAT prince wrote to him from Rhodes, where he was retired for the winter, that the Turks appeared inclined to peace, and that they might easily enter into a treaty with them. The pope was heartily ashamed of demanding peace of an enemy whom they were come so far in search of to make war upon; but the fear of being obliged to bear all the expence of it out of his own purse, made him wish to see it ended. He wrote to the dauphin to find out expedients that in this negotiation might save the honour of the league and the interest of religion. He even went so far as to prescribe him the forms and decorums to be observed in treating with the infidels; but it does not appear that the treaty was concluded. The dauphin, after receiving the pope's dispensation of the vow he had made to spend three whole years in that expedition, returned to his own dominions. Upon the death of Mary des Baux his wife, he had thoughts of marrying again with Blanche, sister to Amadeus, Count of Savoy, and the contract for it was signed; but the dauphin having slighted the good offices which the count of Savoy employed to engage him to restore the castle of Mirabel to the seignior of Beaujeu, the little regard shewed to his request caused a rupture of the marriage. The dauphin afterwards turned his thoughts towards Jane, eldest daughter of Peter de Bourbon, and engaged in it by a solemn treaty. But notwithstanding the honour he would have received from such an alliance, being constantly tossed and hurried with his usual irresolutions, he could not resolve to bring the affair to a conclusion*. This prince not finding in war, and in the path that others take to find it, the distinction and glory that he fought

* *Registre Palati ad annum, 1348 & 1349.*

sought after, fancied he might succeed better in a way that was entirely opposite. He quitted the profession of arms and the government of his dominions, and entered himself among the Dominicans. He resigned Dauphiné to the king of France, who reunited it to his crown from which it had been severed formerly ; and to fix the inconstancy of the dauphin, the pope at the king's request ordained him priest. He afterwards undertook the administration of the archbishoprick of Rheims, but without quitting his religious habit which he wore all his life. Thus lived he a sovereign without subjects, a general without troops or experience, a husband without a wife, a monk without a convent, a priest without a title and without jurisdiction ; and in all these different conditions without ever having done any good to his province, but in resigning it into the hands of our kings. They likewise reproach his memory, and that pretty justly too, for having taken from the prior Biandra the command of the Christian fleet, which under that general, had made itself terrible to the infidels, and afterwards made fresh acquisitions of glory under the same command.

ABOUT that time the order lost the grand master de Villeneuve, a prince highly to be praised for 1346. his œconomy, who during his mastership paid all the debts of the order, repaired and enlarged the fortifications necessary for the defence of the island and city of Rhodes ; and besides built at his own expence, as a monument of his piety, a church in honour of the holy virgin, and dedicated it to her ; and left a sufficient fund for the maintenance of two chaplains to say mass there every day for the repose of his soul.

A GREAT number of pretenders offered themselves for his dignity. The oldest knights, who professed a regular life, were for such as appeared most likely to keep up the discipline of the order. But the younger, without examining too nicely into the regularity of their manners, wished only to have a great captain, that might head them in war, and be the means of acquiring

quiring them glory and riches : such a choice was not without difficulty. The commander de Gozon before-mentioned was one of the electors. When it was his turn to give his voice. "When I entered," says he, "into this conclave, I made a solemn oath, that I would not propose any one but such a knight as I should judge most deserving of this great dignity, and to have the best intentions for the general good of the whole order; and after having seriously considered the present state of Christendom, the wars which we are obliged to maintain continually against the infidels, the resolution and vigour necessary to prevent a relaxation in discipline, I declare that I find no body better qualified for the government of our order than myself." He then made a fine harangue upon his own virtues. The fight against the serpent was not forgot, but he insisted chiefly on his conduct from the time that the grand master de Ville-neuve had made him his lieutenant. "You have always," says he to the other electors, "had some experience of my government ; you know what you are to expect from it, and I do not think you can refuse me your votes without doing me injustice."

How deserving soever this knight was, his colleagues were strangely surprised to hear an elector name himself : such a step made them suspect he was too ambitious ; yet when they came to compare him with the other candidates, they found him far superior of them all, not only in point of courage, of which he had given such illustrious proofs, but also in respect of his wisdom and moderation in commanding. Some of the electors, who were not his friends, could not help saying, that it were to be wished, that what he had advanced to set forth his own merit, had come out of any body's mouth but his own. However, this generous assurance did not displease the greatest part of them ; and several maintained, that after such distinguished actions as his, great men were allowed to speak of themselves with that noble confidence which truth inspires. So all the voices, or at least a majority of them, united

DIEUDONNE
DE GOZON

united in favour of DIEU DONNE DE GOZON: and he was solemnly acknowledged as grand master, to the satisfaction of the convent, and especially of the citizens of the town of Rhodes, and the inhabitants of the island, who since his victory over the serpent looked upon him as the hero of the order.

HIS conduct in the grand mastership answered the great expectations they had of his valour and capacity for government. His first care was to revive the Christian league : the allies joined their squadrons; and the grand master prevailed by his credit to have the command given to the prior of Lombardy, who going immediately in quest of the infidel fleet, met with it in the Archipelago near Embro, or the Embro, a little isle twenty four miles in compass, with a town of the same name, and a port on the eastern coast : this island is twelve miles from the mouth of the Dardanelles in the way towards the isle of Lemnos.

MOST of the Turks, who imagined the Christians to be still in their ports, were landed and dispersed up and down the island. The commodore of the fleet surprised them in this disorder, fell upon them, and took or sunk a great part of their ships.

THIS was less an engagement than a general rout : the soldiers that were on board the fleet, abandoned it to seek for refuge in the island, and such as were landed before, ran to re-imbarke. They only confounded one another; and in this disorder and confusion the general of Rhodes took from them a hundred and eighteen small vessels, light frigates, brigantines, felucca's or armed barks : but thirty two gallies, by help of their crew, put off to sea, and escaped. The Christians afterwards landed, ravaged the island, and made near five thousand slaves.

So complete a victory gave a great reputation to the arms of the knights ; tho' pope Clement VI. like his predecessors, ascribed all the honour of it to the archbishop of Candia his Vice-legate. Constans, others call him

him Livon, king of the lesser Armenia, informed of the forces of the order, sent ambassadors to the grand master to intreat his assistance against an invasion of the Saracens of Egypt, who had seized on part of his dominions. Though this prince followed the Greek rites, and was a schismatic, yet Gozon, full of zeal, and animated with the spirit of his institution, thought it his duty not to abandon any Christians to the fury of those Barbarians. He prevailed upon the council of the order to send troops into Armenia; they fitted out a strong fleet, and the bravest knights embarked on board with a considerable body of infantry. All these troops coming off the coasts of Armenia, joined the army of Constans, who had made a motion that way to favour their landing. Being thus joined in a body, they advanced directly forward against the Saracens; they easily found an enemy that fought them, and soon came to an engagement; the battle was long and obstinate, but the usual valour of the knights decided its success. The Saracens, who expected to have only to deal with the Armenians, whom they had beaten several times before, surprized to see the standards of St. John, which they distinguished still more plainly by the great blows that the knights dealt about, turned their backs and fled. The best part of them perished in the heat of the engagement; and the Christians took all their baggage, and a great number of prisoners.

THE king of Armenia, sustained by this powerful succour, besieged afterwards and recovered all the places which the infidels had seized on; 1347. and the knights of Rhodes did not leave Armenia till they had entirely cleared the country of the Saracens, who got back into Egypt, tho' with great difficulty.

As such considerable enterprizes, and so many different wars, could not be carried on without great expence, the treasury of the order was by this time greatly exhausted: especially, as the pope, out of thriftiness, had quitted the league, as we have just now said, and contributed nothing to it afterwards but indulgences.

He even proposed to the grand master to accept of a truce which the Turks offered, on condition they might have an equal share with the order in the customs of Smyrna, and the port duties paid by foreign shipping: and a war breaking out immediately after between the Genoese and the Venetians, on account of their commerce into the Black Sea, the league was thereupon entirely dissolved.

THE order nevertheless did not fail remonstrating to the pope, that though they were abandoned by their allies, yet they were not allowed by their institution to enter into any public treaty with the infidels; and therefore, till God should raise them up new allies, they would at least keep themselves on the defensive. The grand master wrote at the same to all the commanders who had not furnished their reisponsions. requiring them to pay them in immediately; and history hath transmitted down to us a ^a letter that he wrote to the commanders of Sweden, Denmark and Norway, which deserves to be inserted in this work.

We see by this letter that he reproaches them for having paid no contribution to the order since the loss of the Holy Land: that though they dwelt in the remotest corners of Europe, yet that it would be very surprising, if they had not heard of the conquest which the order had made of the isle of Rhodes, whether they had transferred the seat of their society: that the order, pursuant to its institution, had devoted itself still to religious wars: that all its knights were continually in arms, either on board the gallies of the order, or else at Rhodes, and in the neighbouring isles that depended on it, the defence whereof they had undertaken: and that it was strangely surprising, that the northern knights alone should forget their duty, and continue in a state of indolence and inactivity that dishonoured them: that, as their superior, he charged them, upon their holy obedience, to send immediately a detachment of the youngest of their brother companions, and reinit their reisponsions to Rhodes; and that he knew very well how to punish such as should prove refrac-

refractory to his orders ; whereas those who shewed themselves children of obedience, should find in him an head and superior full of tenderness and goodness, who had nothing in his view but the glory of God and the honour of their profession. Another effect of his zeal for the good of the order, was his obtaining of Clement VI. that no commandry should be disposed of by way of provision to any cardinal, nor should the cardinals be allowed, under pretence of Legatine rights and authority, to exact any contribution from the knights. The pope granted this exemption, probably as a retaliation for the complaisance which the grand master and council had discovered in favour of the vicomte de Turenne, the Pontiff's nephew, to whom they made a grant of la Bastie de Detrats, a seignory belonging to the order, and adjoining to his estate, in exchange for other lands situated near the Rhone, which they annexed to the priory of St. Giles. The pope wrote about it to the grand master, to return him thanks on this occasion, but gave him to understand at the same time, that the doge and senate of Venice complained, that in the war in which they were engaged against the Genoese, there were a great many knights in the troops of their enemies, and it looked as if the order of St. John was fighting against them in favour of the Genoese, though their profession obliged them to employ their arms against the infidels only.

THE grand master's answer was, that in a military order composed of religious of so many different nations, it was no way surprising that the affection of some particular knights should incline towards the interests of their respective countries : that there were likeways Venetian knights, who shewed as much attachment to their own nation as the Genoese ; but that the order was far from approving the conduct of these religious, who were seduced, by an irregular love of their country, (which at the same time was natural enough) to intermeddle in those wars ; but that neither himself, nor the main body of the order were found engaged on either side in the quarrel be-

tween those two mighty republicks, he having always inviolably maintained the neutrality which he professed to observe between Christian princes.

HOWEVER reasonable this answer might appear in respect to the complaints of the Venetians, I do not know after all, whether those religious, who, from a spirit of penance, had taken the three solemn vows of the order at the altar, could, without very just scruples, imbue their arms in the blood of Christians. 'Tis evident at least, that in the first ages of the church, they made a doubt whether it was lawful for Christians to bear arms. The quitting the military profession was esteemed a branch of penance; and even laymen who had killed a Christian, though in a just war, were obliged to make some satisfaction by way of atonement for it. This practice continued to be observed in France in the middle of the ninth century; and we see that after the famous battle of Fontenai, which was fought about A. D. 840. the French bishops required all such as found their consciences troubled for having acted in that engagement out of heat of passion, malice, vanity, or, in a word, out of any other human motive, to confess their offence and expiate their guilt by a rigorous penance.

WHAT is still more decisive in the point we are treating of, is, that the church had never given its sanction to the hospitallers in taking up of arms, but only for the defence of the holy places, and of the Christians, who either dwelt there, or came from the west to pay their veneration to a place sanctified by the birth of the Son of God, who had taken our nature upon him; and to preserve the memory of this pious motive it is, that in the form observed at the profession of the knights, the person who officiates presenting the novice with the sword, says to him, "Take this sword, " and make use of it for your own defence, and for "that of the holy church of God, and for the confu- "sion of the enemies of the cross of Jesus Christ." From whence we may well enough infer, that it was not allowable for these knights to use their arms offen-

sively

sively against any but infidels, and such as were the declared enemies of Jesus Christ. This just motive of not drawing their swords against Christian princes, was the reason why the grand master refused to engage in the civil wars which at that time infested the empire of Constantinople. Pope Clement VI. being dead, Innocent VI. his successor wrote to the grand master, recommending to him the interests of the emperor Matthew Palæologus, who disputed that august title with the emperor John, the son of young Andronicus.

To understand rightly the pretensions of these princes, it must be observed, that the emperor Andronicus at his death leaving John Palæologus tutor to his son, and regent of his territories, that ambitious minister, who had the sovereign authority given him only in trust, made himself absolute and independent master of it. He got himself proclaimed joint emperor with his pupil; and to dazzle the young prince, who was scarce passed the state of infancy, married him to his daughter. But as the tyrant's design was to advance his own son, he soon took him in for a partner in the empire: so that now there was a third emperor, and the father and son afterwards drove the son of Andronicus out of Constantinople. The injured prince was not left without revenge; some of his father's faithful subjects brought him back as it were in triumph to the imperial city, and the Palæologi were obliged to quit it in their turn. The father, to secure his life, threw himself into a monastery, and took the habit of a monk; his son applied himself to the pope for succours, promising to unite the Greek church to the Latin, as soon as he should be restored to the throne. This was the ordinary lure made use of by the Greeks, in order to obtain assistance from the Latins. The pope wrote in very pressing terms to the grand master in favour of Matthew, and that prince was himself the bearer of the letter: but the grand master did not think fit to engage his order in a civil war between Christian princes: besides, that the intractableness of a great many of the commanders of Europe, in making good their responsi-

ons, had disabled the order from furnishing the necessary expences for so great an enterprise. The advanced age of the grand master, and his almost continual infirmities, induced him to ask the pope's consent to abdicate a dignity which he then found as burthensome to him as he had formerly shewn eagerness to obtain it. The pope, who was truly sensible of the merit of that great man, and how useful he was to his order, would not at first consent to it. He exhorted him on the contrary, to support courageously the toils of government.

THE grand master not being able to obtain this consent, which he then looked upon as a favour, employed the remainder of his life in fortifying the city of Rhodes. He walled in all the suburbs on the side of the sea, and at the same time built the mole, where the ships and gallies afterwards put in. These useful cares were the methods he took to console himself for the pope's refusing to allow his resignation. The looseness which, notwithstanding all his endeavours, had crept into the discipline of the order, obliged him to renew his instances. 'Twas not without great anxiety that he found most of the commanders, who resided in Europe, were making use of the protection of the pope himself, as well as of the kings of France, Arragon and Castile, only to elude his orders; a protection which made those knights as much arbiters of their duty as they were negligent of it. Gozon finding no remedy for so enormous a grievance, dispatched new deputies to the pope, who complied at last in admitting his resignation. That pontiff's consent for their proceeding to a new election, was brought to Rhodes;

but that license proved of no use, by reason of Dec. 13. the grand master's sudden death, if that term 1353. sudden may be allowed with regard to so good

a man, who had always been more watchful over his own conduct, than over that of the knights under his care. His funeral was celebrated with the just eulogiums of his brother knights, and the tears of all the inhabitants of the isle, and of the poor especially,

Iy, to whom he was indeed a father. All the inscription put upon his tomb was this : HERE LIES THE VANQUISHER OF THE DRAGON.

THE convent and chapter of Rhodes, after Gozon's death, chose for his successor brother Peter de Cornillan or Cormelian, a knight of the language of Provence. He certainly justly merit- PETER DE CORNILLAN.
ed that eminent dignity, on account of the regularity of his life, and even of 1353.

the severity of his morals ; and the order indeed was at that time in need of such a superior. As soon as he had taken possession of his dignity, he called a general chapter at Rhodes. Various abuses had crept into the government, which in timehad become customs : and such as made their advantage of them would willingly have made them pass for laws. The first, and indeed one of the most dangerous, was the abuse made of the grand master's seal, in putting it, without his knowledge or consent, to orders and receipts, which were afterwards lodged in the treasury. Another abuse, not less prejudicial to the whole body of the knights, was the priors assuming a nomination to the commandries vacant within their priories, and exercising this usurped power in such a manner, that they often filled up places with their own friends and relations, without any regard to merit, age, or the rights of seniority. The grand master prevailed with the chapter to make a regulation, ordaining, that for the future they should not make use of the grand master's seal in any matter relating to the revenue ; but that all ordinances should be sealed with the seal of the convent, and in a full chapter.

By the second regulation, the nomination to all commandries was vested in the grand master and council of the order, who were to fill them up, due regard being first had to the rank, the seniority, and the services of the knights. These were not the only abuses which the grand master had a mind to correct ; but as his prudence was not inferior to his zeal, which burnt with the brightest flame, he brought on the schemes he had drawn up for reformation at different times, deferring the

the execution of them according as he found his own authority to grow stronger in the government.

WHILST the grand master was thus entirely taken up with the restoring of discipline, some secret enemies of the order, at the court of Rome, resumed the design of getting all the revenues of the templars out of the hands of the knights of Rhodes, expecting, no doubt, to get the best part of them to themselves. However, to avoid suspicion as much as possible, they carried on this attack against the order with a great deal of art. Some went no further than to tell the pope, that they found every day that the riches and confiscated revenues of the templars greatly exceeded whatever had been said of them ; others insinuated farther, that the hospitallers were not numerous enough to find leisure to make proper enquiries into those great possessions ; that the greatest part of the knights were gone over into Europe ; that it looked as if they had abandoned the isle of Rhodes ; and though some still continued about the grand master, shutting themselves up in the most retired part of their palaces, yet they were entirely taken up with their pleasures, and the care of amassing wealth. These discourses were spread about with great secrecy and artifice, and the pope was prejudiced with them by insensible degrees. In short their enemies went so far as to propose to the pontiff a sequestration of all the revenues of the templars into his own hands, to be employed afterwards in pious uses, as his holiness should think fit ; or, if he thought proper, to be disposed of in founding a new military order, which might, by its zeal, incite the emulation of the knights of Rhodes, and cure them of a profuseness so contrary to their rule and institution.

THE pope took another, and indeed a very extraordinary step with regard to the conquests made by the Turks. Orchanes, whom we have lately mentioned, and who is looked upon as the second prince of the Ottoman or O:homan race, after having subdued the greatest part of Anatolia, beaten the emperor John Palæologus on several occasions, and taken Prusa, Nicomedia, and

and Nice, crossed the Hellespont, and seemed inclined to fix the seat of his empire in the Morea. 'Tis said that a great earthquake having rendered the taking of Gallipolis more easy to him, he said to his officers, " Let us stay in Europe, since God opens us the way to it." Pope Innocent VI. above mentioned, alarmed with the rapidity of his conquests, out of an apprehension that he might fall upon Italy itself, did, in order to oblige him to return into Asia, order the knights of Rhodes to abandon that isle, and transport the convent, and their place of residence into some part of the continent bordering upon the Turks or Saracens, and situated on the side either of Palestine or Anatolia, in expectation that the knights, by an advantageous diversion, might draw the infidels arms upon themselves, and thus kindling a war in the heart of the Turkish dominions, might serve for a bulwark to Christendom ; a project which had some time before suggested to the pontiff's predecessors, though the author of it must certainly have been some secret enemy of the order, and as wretched a politician as he was ill versed in the art of war. 'Tis amazing how the pope could propose to the order to abandon an isle strongly fortified, and to renounce all the advantages which the Christians derived from the sea and from their fleets, which covered equally the isle of Cyprus and kingdom of Armenia, only to send them, as we may say, to the slaughter, and oblige them, like new adventurers, to seek a settlement in the heart of the dominions of infidels, who were too powerful to suffer them there for a moment.

YET notwithstanding these just considerations, which must naturally offer themselves to the pope's thoughts, the pontiff, still prejudiced in favour of his project, dispatched to Rhodes brother Ferdinand de Heredia, Castellan of Emposta, and grand prior of Castile, who was considered at the court of Rome as Innocent's constant and favourite, sending also with him brother Raymond Berenger, preceptor or commander of Castel-Sarasin, and brother Peter de Cornillan, commander of Val-

Val-Pujet, and in all probability a relation of the grand master; all three being of the number of the most distinguished knights of the order, the two first of which came afterwards to be grand masters.

THE pope directed them to lay before the grand master and council the complaints which he continually received of the indolence and lethargy wherein the whole order seemed to have been buried for some time; and to represent, that whilst the Turks were ravaging Greece, and threatening Italy, the knights finding themselves secure in Rhodes, by the strong fortifications with which it was defended, and growing effeminate with luxury and ease, seemed no ways affected with it, but squandered away the great income which they enjoyed, from the confiscated revenues of the templars, and derived from the piety of the faithful, in criminal pleasures, that decency and modesty do not allow us to mention; that he knew very well pope John XXII. Benedict XII. and Clement VI. his immediate predecessors, had, in order to get them out of those delightful places, where they ran such an hazard of their salvation, often pressed them to remove their abode into the Holy Land, though as yet in the hands of the infidels; but that the holy see was sensible of the little regard they had hitherto shown to such counsels, which ought rather to have been considered as express orders, and received by them as laws; that he enjoined them to set immediately about this transmigration to some place, from whence they might, with the assistance of heaven, force their way through into the Holy Land, that otherways he should be obliged to employ the most proper methods to force them to it, and should particularly deprive them of the estates of the templars, which he would employ in the founding of a new military order, whose zeal might perhaps excite their emulation, or at least serve for an eternal reproach to them.

THE grand master answered the pope, that he had received his orders with great respect, but could not, without consulting and obtaining the consent of the general

neral chapter of the order, so hastily abandon a conquest of so great importance, and for which so many knights had shed their dearest blood ; that he was going immediately to summon a chapter in Rhodes itself, and would notify his holiness's intention to his brethren of the order. The pope apprehending, that if the chapter was held at Rhodes, the riches of that island, its fortifications, haven, fleets, and even soft and luxurious life which they led there, might determine the knights to continue in it, issued out a solemn bull, declaring it to be his pleasure, that the chapter should be held either at Nismes or Montpelier, places not far from Avignon, from whence he certainly flattered himself, that his authority would have the more effectual influence over the assembly. The pontiff observed in his bull, that since the return of his envoys, he had learned with surprise, that some knights about his court had wrote to Rhodes, to this effect, viz. That they had no occasion to be in any pain about what the castellan had said to them, of which he himself was author ; that that dextrous courtier had magnified his reproaches and threats, only to make himself necessary to his order, but that the pope had expressed himself very differently on that subject before them, and that they might be very easy about the affair of their removal. The pope added, that he addressed this bull to them, as an irrefragable proof as well of his own will and pleasure, as of the truth of what their Castellan had told them from him, and to prevent such practices from occasioning any delay in their settling upon the frontiers of the infidels.

'TWOULD be impossible to describe the uneasiness which the grand master felt, both in seeing the pope persist in so destructive a project, as well as the fear he had of his order's insisting on its sovereignty, and setting up to oppose it. He was divided between the obedience which he owed to the pontiff, and that which he thought due to his order, and the companions of it ; two duties which to him appeared almost equally indispensable. In this terrible conflict, death came in as

it were to his assistance, and put an end to his life in the eighteenth month of his mastership. The ROGER DE PINS. knights chose in his stead Roger de Pins, a knight of the language of Provence, of an illustrious house of Languedoc, a relation of 1353. Odo de Pins, the twenty-third grand master of the order, and of Gerard de Pins, who, in the vacancy of the mastership, had won a signal victory over Orchanes the son of Othoman.

THE pope, who would not allow the chapter to be held at Rhodes, and had by his own authority summoned it to meet at Nismes or Montpelier, being still apprehensive that it might come to resolutions contrary to the schemes he had projected with relation to Rhodes; and in order to be better acquainted with their debates, would needs have it held in Avignon itself, as it were under his own eye. But the impatience he was in of getting the knights out of the isle of Rhodes, and a considerable time being necessary for their coming out of the various provinces of Christendom to Avignon, was the reason of his allowing them to hold an assembly at his court, in which brother William de Mailly grand prior of France, and brother William Chalus grand prior of Auvergne, presided in the grand master's name, and in quality of his lieutenant on this side of the sea.

HAPPILY for the order, some time before the opening of this assembly, it had been suggested to the pope, that in the design he had of drawing the knights out of the isle of Rhodes, it would be of much greater service to Christendom, and particularly to Italy, to settle them in the Morea than in Palestine, where they could never resist the formidable power of the Turks and Saracens. The pope liked the proposal well enough: Robert, titular emperor of Constantinople, was then prince of Tarento, and sovereign of Achaia or the Morea, by John duke of Duras, his uncle's grant of it to him. But James of Savoy, eldest son to Philip prince of Piedmont, laid claim to the Morea, as belonging to him in right of Isabel de Ville-hardouin his mother; and in

the

the midst of these different pretensions, the Turk, who had the strongest right on his side, daily seized upon some place or other in its province. The pope, to prevent the loss of it to Christendom, proposed to the prince of Savoy to treat with the knights of Rhodes about his claim. This great affair was debated in the assembly at Avignon : the knights, who did not care openly to clash with the pope's sentiments, named their commissioners ; but as they expected some change from time, they spun out the negotiation to a great length, under various pretences, and made so slow a progress in it, that death surprized the prince of Savoy before any thing was concluded in it ; and the design was not resumed of a long time afterwards, as will be observed in the sequel of this work.

VARIOUS regulations however were made in this assembly, relating to discipline, and which point out the abuses which had crept into the order with respect to the distribution of their alms. Ever since the estates of the templars had been annexed to the^a manse of the hospitallers, they had, to the great offence of the people, and prejudice of the poor, neglected all the duties of charity in the houses of that order, under pretence that they officiated in the commandries of the knights of Rhodes. The assembly made an order, that, independent from those alms, they should immediately resume those charitable distributions which were used to be made in the houses that had belonged to the templars.

THOUGH the pope was far from being favourable to the order, as we have seen, yet no body had a greater ascendant over him than a knight of Rhodes, brother John Ferdinand d'Heredia by name, of the language of Aragon, and Castellan of Emposta. He was the only counsellor and minister of the pontiff, who employed him even in foreign negotiations. To give him the greater authority at his court, he had made him governor of Avignon, and all the comtat Venaissin. So distinguishing a favour might perhaps make one suspect that the pope's

* Manse, an income appointed for the maintenance of the table of any prelate or society.

extraordinary projects were suggested to him by the Aragonian, who, if the order had been obliged to abandon the isle of Rhodes, would have been well enough pleased to have got himself, under the title of bailiff, named sovereign prince of it by the pope. At least all his conduct shews, that he made use of the pope's authority only to aggrandize himself, without any regard to the statutes and regulations of the general chapters. Thus he obtained successively the grand priory of Castile, and also that of St. Giles, to which the greedy Spaniard got himself named by the pope, who conferred it upon him by his own absolute authority, and without the knowledge or consent of the grand master. The order was perfectly confounded at so surprising an innovation ; the popes indeed, besides the power of the keys, had likeways a particular authority over the order of St. John, as being the first superiors of it ; but they had hitherto made use of this authority only for its protection, or for the correcting of abuses which are inevitable in this life, and which are apt to creep even into the most austere societies.

THE knights complained that this last pope employed his authority only in destroying the form of their government, and that they could no longer depend upon their years of service and seniority, if one of their brother knights, by the insinuations of a court intrigue, and in contempt of the wisest regulations, had it in his power to engross the best commandries in every language. The grand master and council sent ambassadors to the pope, to declare to him the just remonstrances of the whole order ; and the grand master, in order to engage Heredia to desist from the pope's nomination, sent him ample provisions, by which he constituted him his lieutenant on this side the sea. But all these steps were alike fruitless ; the pope was inflexible, either out of affection to his favourite, or that he might not seem to derogate from that supreme authority, which he claimed to exercise in the government of the order, as a right with which he was invested : and Heredia abusing the new favour done him by the grand master,

master, not only neglected paying into the common treasury the responsions of the many commandries he had engrossed, but also, under pretence of his post of lieutenant, kept the responsions of other commandries in his hands. If they came to be vacant, he got new provisions from the pope, and by this violent conduct, bore a despotic sway in his order.

THIS occasioned a new embassy; the grand master sent brother Roger de Montaut, a great commander, and brother Stephen Montaigu to Avignon, to desire the pope's leave to prosecute Heredia, as an usurper of the estate and revenues of the order. The pope, who did not care to protect his injustice openly, pretended to consent to the grand master's request, and named two cardinals to take cognizance of the affair. But these, under the specious name of judges, acted only as mediators; and in order to make their own private advantage of Heredia's credit, they prevailed with the ambassadors to take up with a slight satisfaction, and give over the prosecution. The pope sent a gentleman of his household to Rhodes, on purpose to tell the grand master from him, that they would oblige him in not giving Heredia any disturbance in his enjoyment of the dignities he had conferred on him, the revenues of which, he said, that knight employed only for the interest of the church, and the service of the holy see.

THE grand master was forced to connive at an abuse which so powerful a protector hindered him from correcting. But for fear such a pernicious example should draw as bad consequences after it, and to prevent other priors from appropriating to themselves, in imitation of Heredia, the commandries, or at least the responsions belonging to the order within the bounds of their respective priories, this wise grand master conveened a general chapter at Rhodes, and designedly chose for that purpose a place that was immediately under the government of the order, that the debates might be carried on with the greater freedom, and in order that they might take a resolution not to be baffled by other potentates. In this chapter particular receivers of the

dues of the order were appointed in every priory, and who were accountable only to the common treasury. They made also, at the same time, a decree, incapacitating the priors from being provided with any other commandries but such as composed their priorial court. Some serving brothers having, by their intrigues, got the cross of knighthood, a regulation was made in the same chapter, forbidding the advancement of any serving brother to that dignity : a regulation agreeable to that of a great pope, who had very wisely established the distinction of those two ranks, by a distinction of their habits; a decree, which, it were to be wished, might be strictly observed, for the sake of the nobility and gentry.

THE grand master did not long survive the conclusion of this chapter. The order lost in him a chief who was very zealous for the maintaining of discipline, as the poor of the island did a very charitable father. It was observable, that during the time that the plague infested that island, as well as all the east, and which was followed by a dreadful famine, he immediately employed all his income, and sold afterwards his plate and furniture to supply the necessities of the poor; which justly procured him the title of almsgiver, with which the order and all mankind had distinguished him, and in heaven a just recompence, and the hundred fold so expressly promised by him whose promises are infallible.

THE order elected for his successor brother Raimond Berenger, a native of Dauphiné, of the language of Provence, commander of Castel-Sarafion, whose descent historians derive from the Berengers that were sovereigns of Italy, as others

do from those that reigned at Barcelona, and in the county of Catalonia. But whatever his family was, it is certain that he reflected a new lustre upon it by his valour, and the boldness of his enterprises. Some Egyptian corsairs used frequently to infest the coasts of Cyprus, and made prizes of all ships that sailed in those seas

seas under the standard of the cross. The grand master not only fitted out several gallies, which gave them chace, but resolved also, in concert with the king of Cyprus, to go and burn them even in the port of Alexandria. That prince and the grand master made up a fleet of near a hundred vessels of different bulk ; they put land forces on board, most of them drawn from the coasts of France, but without being let into the secret of the enterprize they were to be employed in, which was communicated to no body but Urban V. who then sat in the pontifical chair.

THE fleet being ready to sail, the king and the grand master went on board, followed by a great number of knights, and in less than five days landed under the walls of Alexandria. They clapped ladders to the walls, and attempted to scale them. The Alexandrians were struck with surprise; but besides a strong garrison, there were such an infinite number of people in that great city, the richest in Egypt, that the walls were in a moment lined with soldiers and inhabitants, that poured down showers of arrows upon the Christians. The besieged standing firm on the parapet, with their pikes and halbards, dealing great blows about, throw down the besiegers, push them into the ditch, and overwhelm them with stones of a large size. New assailants supply the place of the slain and wounded, and without being daunted at the death of their companions, endeavour to get on the top of the walls ; some are pierced through with arrows, others precipitated or overturned with their ladders. The besieged throw boiling oil and fireworks on all sides ; these burn the machines of the Christians, stick to their cloaths, penetrate even to their bodies, forcing the soldiers all in a flame to give over the attack, and throw themselves into the water for relief. Never was a more furious and bloody attack known ; but in spite of the horrible image of death, which presented itself on all sides, the knights of Rhodes, animated by their own bravery, and the grand master's intrepid air, renew the attack, clap their ladders again to the walls, and mount-

ing over the dead bodies of their companions, get up to the top, leap upon the parapet, throw themselves into the place, and kill all before them. From thence the victorious troops spread themselves over the city, force into the houses that are next the ramparts, massacre husbands in the arms of their wives, plunder the richest furniture, and make slaves of all that escape the first fury of the soldiery.

THO' the king and grand master had lost abundance of men in the several attacks they made, they yet would have been glad to have kept their post and maintained their conquest. But having advice that the sultan was advancing with all the forces of Egypt to drive them thence, and seeing themselves in a place that was still crowded with an infinite number of inhabitants, who had intrenched themselves in the lower town, they resolved to retire ; and putting an inestimable booty on board their own fleet, they set fire to all the vessels of the infidels that were in the port, and re-embarked with their prisoners. The king stood away for Cyprus, and the grand master for Rhodes, where both of them arrived happily.

THE grand master having delivered Peter de St. George, a nephew or near relation of Urban, out of captivity among the infidels, would have the merit of conducting him himself to Avignon, but before he set out, advice came of that pope's death. Historians say, that just before he expired, and after having received the sacraments of the church, he said, in the presence of his chamberlain, his confessor, and several cardinals, directing his speech to them, " I firmly believe all that the holy catholic church believes and teaches ; and if I have ever advanced any thing in any manner whatsoever different from it, I retract it, and submit my self to the determination and censure of the church."*

PETER ROGER, called cardinal de Beaufort, nephew to pope Clement VI. succeeded Urban V. and took on

* Præsentibus etiam camerario, confessore, pluribusque aliis familiaribus suis, ac aliis multis notabilibus personis, dixit & afferuit se

on him the name of Gregory XI. The grand master was then thinking to abdicate his dignity. The intractableness of most of the European commanders had obliged him to take this extraordinary step. Upon his return from the expedition of Alexandria, he was informed by the council, that the order could get nothing from the responsions of the west. This inflexibility equally surprised and afflicted him : in vain did he send the most pressing orders ; no answer was given to them, but by an obstinate silence, which served as a screen to a direct disobedience. Many of these commanders were in possession of several commandries, and employed their responsions and the estate of the order, either in purchasing the favour and protection of princes, or in enriching their own families ; and such as were the least irregular among them, whenever they remitted money to Rhodes, considered it as their own free gift, looking upon their responsions as arbitrary alms and acts of mere liberality. Considerable disputes arose also between the languages of Provence and Italy ; and the principal knights of those two languages refused to submit to the judgment of the grand master. So much disobedience from all parts gave him great uneasiness ; but as he truly loved his order, he believed, that another grand master, of more capacity and resolution than himself, would make him be more exactly obeyed, and might restore an happy correspondence between the head and members of the order. This was the chief motive that made him desirous to abdicate his dignity : but the pope, who knew his merit, would not give his consent ; and that pontiff, who, to take off some of the burthen from his shoulders, was

for

se tenere & credere firmiter, sicq;ie confessus est simpliciter quidquid sancta, catholica & apostolica tene*, docet & prædicat ecclesia : & si per prius docendo, legendo, prædicando, aut disputando, vel aliâs aliud quovis modo prædicaverat, vel dixerat, totum id revocavit, voluitque haberi pro non dicto, submittens se & dicta sua hujusmodi correctioni et determinationi dictæ sanctæ matris ecclesiae, à qua asservit se nunquam deviasse scienter. Gesta U.b. 5. apud Bosq. Rainal. t. 16. ad. ann. 1370. l. 23.

for taking cognizance of the affairs of the order, summoned a general assembly of the principal commanders at Avignon, dispensing with the grand master's attendance on account of his very great age, desiring him only to send him an account of such regulations as he judged most necessary for the restoring of discipline.

1373. THEY began this assembly with examining into the disputes between the languages of Provence and Italy. The occasion of this dispute arose from the language of Provence's enjoying, as being the most ancient and first of the order, the priory of the kingdom of Hungary, and those of Capua and Barletta in Italy, with the commandries of St. Stephen, Monopoli, Venice, and St. Euphemia, which the language of Italy demanded back ; insisting likeways, that the priory of Hungary should be annexed to it by way of equivalent, and to serve as a balance in the chapter to the power of the language of Provence, which alone had more voices than two other languages.

As the language of Provence pleaded in its defence, by virtue of the title of possession, the pope referred the determination of the dispute to the cardinals of Spain and Florence, and by their mediation rather than a rigorous decision, it was agreed, that upon the first vacancy of the priory of Hungary, the grand master and council should collate to it, chusing indifferently out of the two languages the person they thought most deserving, and that afterwardsthe two languages should nominate to it alternately ; that the priories of Capua and Barletta, and the commandries of Naples and St. Euphemia should be annexed to the language of Italy, but that St. Stephen, Estonibbia, Alife, Venu-tia, Monopoli, and their dependencies, should continue, as they were in possession of the language of Provence.

IT was enacted in the same assembly, pursuant to the grand master's intentions, and the memorial which he had sent to the pope, that no knight should enjoy more than one grand commandry, or two small ones, i. e. such

such as their responsions did not amount to more than two hundred florins, and that all the responsions should be paid exactly every year, on pain of deprivation of the commandry. To these they added another regulation, that in the vacancy of the grand mastership, when they were proceeding to the election of one, they should not chuse the electors out of all the languages, as had been practised till then, but that every language should nominate two electors. As to the sovereign council of the order, a statute was made to determine that it should not be deemed a full one, unless there were present in it the eight conventional bailiffs, three grand priors, the overseer of the infirmary, two of the most ancient knights of every language, over whom the grand master should preside ; who, on account of his eminent dignity, was to have two votes in all assemblies, as had been constantly practised till that time ; and that this council, when full, should dispose of all vacant priories and commandries.

THESE wise regulations, authorised by the pope's approbation, were sent to Rhodes, and notified to the whole order. The grand master received them with a sensible satisfaction, but death prevented his reaping the fruit of them, that being referred to brother ROBERT DE JULLIAC, ROBERT DE grand prior of France, whom the chapter JULLIAC. of Rhodes elected in his absence to be their grand master.

He was in France resident on his priory, when he received the news of his promotion ; upon which he immediately set out for Avignon, 1373. where he paid his duty to the pope. He afterwards changed all the receivers on this side the sea, whom he found negligent in the discharge of their office : this was the first use he made of his authority. His next act was an instance of obedience to the holy see, taking upon himself and his order the property and defence of the castle and lower town of Symrna, which the confederate army had taken from the Turks, as we have shewn a little before. The archbishop and inhabi-

inhabitants having complained to the pope, that Otto-bon Catafleo their governor, who was rather a merchant than a soldier, abandoned them frequently for the sake of his traffic, to make voyages into Italy, so that the place was left without either garrison or provisions, the pope signified his intentions to the knights, viz. that they should unite Symrna to the other possessions of the order. In vain did the grand master represent to him, that the fortres was seated in the midst of the Turkish territories, and at such a distance from Italy, that in case of a siege, there was no hopes of a speedy relief; and that likewise considerable sums were necessary for maintaining the garrison, which his order was in no condition to furnish. The pope assigned only a thousand pounds a year for the defraying of this expence, which the treasurer of the order was to levy upon the tithes of Cyprus. Moreover, as what the grand master had represented to him about the situation of the town of Symrna, viz. that it was surrounded by the territories of the infidels, was the very reason which had determined him to put the defence of it into the hands of the knights, in expectation that the Turks might have a stop put to the progress of their arms, when they should have such formidable neighbours; the pontiff ordered the grand master and council, under pain of excommunication, to throw immediately into Symrna a sufficient garrison, that should consist of a good number of knights and troops in the service and pay of the order. The grand master was preparing to set out for Rhodes with these orders, when he received the unwelcome news that divisions were broke out between the knights of the convent, and the council. The knights complained that the council, as well in the nomination to the commandries, as in disputes arising between the knights, paid little regard either to the rights of seniority or to justice, but regulated their nominations and decisions by the credit which the parties had in the society. The council on their side sent the grand master word, that the knights had found out a way of eluding all their orders, by continually appealing

ing to the holy see, which entirely ruined the discipline and authority of the government. The grand master acquainted the pope with these reciprocal complaints ; and the pontiff, in order to favour some particular knights, issued out a bull, expressly annulling all the nominations made by the council in the vacancy of the mastership and absence of the grand master ; but withal, he, by the same bull, (after having severely reprimanded the knights that made use, as he said, of appeals, for no other end but to withdraw themselves from the obedience which they owed to their superiors) ordered the council not to mind such appeals for the future, requiring all of them to dispose themselves equally for receiving their grand master, as their lawful superior, and one whom he had invested with the apostolical authority over them.

THE grand master set out with these orders, and arrived happily at Rhodes. His presence, his affability, and the exact justice which he distributed with impartiality to all his religious, without the least distinction, soon restored peace and concord among them. He then acquainted them with the pope's intentions with respect to the defence of Symrna ; and tho' the principal persons in the council saw plainly, that it was sacrificing all those knights whom they put on that service, and that it would be the sending them to the slaughter, they nevertheless resolved to obey ; nay, a considerable number of knights generously offered to take upon themselves an employ in which the danger and glory were equally certain. In fact, there was no likelihood that the Turkish emperors, whose power was daily encreasing, would suffer the knights to continue peaceable possessors of a place, and that too in the heart of their dominions, which they had taken from them.

SOLIMAN I. the eldest son of Orchanes, following his father's steps, had in less than two years annexed the best part of Thrace to his empire, and made himself master of Adrianople and Philippopolis. As Amurath I. his brother and successor lived longer, so he extended

tended his conquests much farther. The kingdoms of Bulgaria, Servia, Bosnia and Thessaly, and the principalities of Epirus, Achaia and Caramania, which had been formed out of the ruins of the Greek empire, became the object of his ambition : and he looked upon the conquest thereof as a means of opening a way to that of Constantinople. He defeated in battle Cracovilch's king of Bulgaria, and had the same advantage over the Despot of Servia ; he had lately reduced the town of Pheres, which was at that time the capital of Macedonia. Mysia fell before him ; and the emperor John, or Calojohn Paleologus, advancing into Romania to stop his progress, was entirely routed, and 'tis even said, that this sultan was victorious in thirty six engagements or battles.

YET, as if in all this he had yet undertaken nothing for his glory, he made extraordinary levies of troops in all his territories. So considerable an armament, the marches and countermarches of such a number of troops, alarmed all his neighbours, every body stood upon his guard, without being able to guess on what side he would turn his arms.

THE grandmaster acquainted the pope with all these motions, and with the reasons which made him apprehend that Symrna and even Rhodes might be the secret object of this mighty armament. He represented to him at the same time, that, in the expedition of Alexandria, the order had lost above a hundred knights, whose places had not been filled up with others ; that the isle and city of Rhodes wanted a speedy succour, and that he besought his holiness to make immediate provision for it, for fear of any surprise from the infidels.

THE pope on this occasion conveened an assembly of the chief commanders at Avignon, where it was resolved to send five hundred knights, and as many esquires or serving brothers to Rhodes in the month of March following. The priors, pursuant to a particular order of the pope, were to name the knights of their priory whom they thought in a condition to

march ;

march; and each knight had the right of chusing himself the serving brother that he would have to attend him, and thought fittest for his service; which, by the way, is a proof that these serving brothers were a sort of esquires to the knights, and that every knight at that time had a serving brother appointed to attend his person, and perform military service under his orders. These knights and their attendants arrived safe at Rhodes, and the grand master and convent were highly pleased with so considerable a recruit. But they had no dispute this year with the Turks, all whose forces fell again upon the Bulgarians and Servians.

THE order however suffered more this year from its own members than from the infidels. Domestic enemies, and the seeds as it were of rebellion, started up in it, which broke out chiefly in England, Castile and Portugal.

BROTHER Robert d'Alri prior of England, Sancho de Sumassa prior of Castile, and Alvarez Gonsalvo prior of Portugal, being cantoned in their priories, and being supported by the monarchs of their respective countries, refused openly to pay their responsions. The prior of England founded his disobedience upon an injustice which he pretended the grand master had done him, in bestowing a commandry of Scotland upon a Scotch knight; whereas he maintained that it depended on the prior of England. His sovereign, who considered Scotland as an antient fief of his crown, not only supported the prior in his disobedience, but confiscated likewise the revenues of all the commandries which the order had within his dominions. The grand master complained of these violent proceedings to the pope, who being informed of the justice of his nomination, caused the proofs of it to be transmitted to the court of England, and at the same time threatened to excommunicate the prior of that nation, if he did not immediately pay his responsions, and get the sequestration taken off the goods of the order, which he had procured to be seized. The fear of excommunication brought him back to his duty, as

well as the prior of Castile, to whom the like menaces had been intimated from the holy see. These fulminations, however terrible they might be, made no impression on the prior of Portugal ; upon which the pope, to touch a man to the quick, who was to be wrought upon by nothing but what concerned his interest, conferred his priory upon brother John Fernand, commander of Thouloute, and cited him to appear at Rome, in order to be degraded of the dignity of knighthood, and stripped of the habit of the order. The mischief was, that these decrees of the court of Rome had scarce any effect with regard to temporalities, any farther than the prince had a mind to support them with his authority ; and several years passed away before this rebellious prior returned to his duty.

THIS year is assigned for the death of the grand master de Julliac, who enjoyed that dignity little more than two years. He was generally regretted on account of his wisdom, prudence, and particularly the mildness of his government. The chapter and con-

JOHN FER- vent of Rhodes chose for his successor **JOHN FERNAND D'HERE-**
DINAND brother **DIA**, castellan of Emposta, or grand pri-
D'HEREDIA. or of Arragon, grand prior also of St.

1376. Giles and Castile, who was absent at that time, he being always near the person of the popes, in quality of governor of Avignon, and the Comtat Venaissin.

'TWILL perhaps appear strange, after all that hath been said of the conduct of this knight, that the order, the principal dignities whereof he had usurped contrary to all their rules, should make such a choice. But in all probability the electors considered that this knight was still in great credit at the court of Avignon, and that he had the like credit with most of the princes of Christendom, who were careful to distinguish a man of capacity in a peculiar manner, whose advice had a great influence in the various resolutions and conduct of the pope's court. Besides, a mischievous spirit of rebellion,

rebellion, arising from a sordid avarice, having for some time past infected several of the commanders, 'twas no ill policy in the order to put a man of Heredia's power and authority at their head, in a dignity where the interests of the order were no longer to be distinguished from his own.

WHATEVER the motives were that determined the electors to choose him their grand master, the reader perhaps will not be displeased to have a little more particular account of a knight, who after having played the tyrant over his order, became afterwards a tender father, and one of the principal ornaments of it. John Ferdinand d'Heredia was descended from one of the noblest houses in Arragon : Blasco Heredia, his elder brother, was invested with the dignity of d'el justicia, or great justiciary; a dignity established in the kingdom, to curb the regal authority, and hinder the sovereign from abusing it, contrary to the privileges of the nation. He discharged singly that function which the Ephori of Sparta were formerly entrusted with against their kings. This lord, having for several years had no children by his wife, to prevent the extinction of his family, obliged young Heredia his brother, whom we are now speaking of, to marry. He had only two daughters by that marriage, and his wife dying in childbed, his brother, who was still fond of seeing heirs of his own name, engaged him in a second alliance, and married him to Donna Theresa Contellia, niece and heiress to his own wife ; so that all the estate of those two great houses was like to center in young Heredia and his children. He had a son and a daughter by this second marriage, and was soon after left a widower by the death of his second wife ; but his elder brother's, after many years of barrenness, having been brought to bed of two sons one after another, he saw himself at once left without any estate, and all his hopes blasted.

IN this melancholy situation, after recommending his children to his elder brother, and without communicating his design to any body, he embarked and sailed for Rhodes, where he desired to be admitted into the

order, and was received by the grand master de Ville-neuve as a knight of the language of Arragon. His noble air, his polite behaviour, and the courage and bravery whereby he distinguished himself in various engagements against the infidels, soon gained him the esteem and affection of the principal knights. He recommended himself particularly to the grand master by the regularity of his life, and by an adroit and insinuating temper, which enabled him with ease to assume any shape that might any way contribute to his advancement.

'TWAS to these rare qualities, and the particular esteem which the grand master had for him, that he was indebted for a faculty commandry (one in the disposal of which favour was allowed) called Alambro, which he either exchanged afterwards, or was promoted from it to that of Villet. And as a great number of the knights, especially of the old ones, had been killed in the Scalado of Alexandria, he rose gradually from one preferment to another, till he came in his turn to be bai-liff of Capsa, and afterwards castellan of Emposta, one of the principal dignities of the order, and the most considerable in Europe, after that of grand master, as well from its immense revenues, as from the largeness of its jurisdiction, and the number and quality of its vassals.

FORTUNE, which had hitherto led him as it were by the hand, did not desert him in that conjuncture. The grand priory of Catalonia becoming vacant, two candidates presented themselves for it; the one, in prejudice of the rights and privileges of the order, got a provision to it from the pope; the other, a knight called Peter Berenger Nicossa, claimed the priory by right of seniority. Nor could any doubt be made of his right; and it was moreover the interest of the order, not to suffer the knights to turn their views to the court of Rome, instead of applying themselves to merit preferments by their services. But as at Rhodes they were fearful of offending the pope, the grand master and council resolved to send an ambassador to him. The

negoti-

negotiation was such as required an able, subtle minister, and one who was of a tractable disposition, and could find out a way to preserve the rights and privileges of the order, without violating the papal authority. The grand master fancied, that among so great a number of knights, he had distinguished in Heredia all the qualities of an able negotiator. He nominated him ambassador to the pope, and got his choice approved of by the council. The instructions given to the castellan were, that after having complimented the pontiff in the name of the grand master and the whole body of knights, he should represent to him the injury that the order was like to suffer from his nomination ; that the greatest part of the knights would find it a much shorter way to arrive at commandries in obtaining them by favour and intrigue, than to wait a tedious number of years, and expect them from length of time, and a series of services ; that such provisions would ruin their discipline entirely ; that the convent would soon be a desert ; and the knights, neglecting their residence at Rhodes, and the other duties they were obliged to, would apply themselves entirely either to the court of Rome, or to those of the princes of Europe.

THE ambassador had orders to insist strenuously on the revocation of the apostolic brief; but as they were apprehensive the pope would stand by his nomination, be the consequence what it would, they gave the ambassador leave to terminate the affair by an accommodation, if he found the least overture towards one.

HEREDIA set out with these instructions, and arriving at Avignon, in the first audience that he had of the pope, he represented to him, with great art and eloquence, that tho' the order paid an absolute submission and all due respect to his nomination, yet it could not help complaining of a provision which violated its privileges, and was going to destroy all that had been done in its favour by the pontiffs his predecessors ; that he was commissioned to lay at his holiness's feet, who

was the common father of the faithful, the just remonstrances of a body that was consecrated to the defence of Christianity, but whose zeal would infallibly cool, if the several members that composed it, found that they were to be bereaved of the recompence which had till then been always annexed to their services. The pope made answer in general terms, importing, that he had heard a very good character of the person he had named to the priory of Catalonia, but should not be sorry if the matter was accommodated in an amicable manner, to the satisfaction of the parties concerned, provided it could be done without infringing the authority of the holy see. The ambassador saw plainly from hence that there was no bringing the pope to repeal the provision which he had granted: he therefore applied himself entirely to make up the dispute, not forgetting at the same time his own private interest in the accommodation. The two claimants saw him often, and he played his cards so dextrously, that he brought them to agree on dividing the great revenues of the priory, which he prevailed with the pope to approve. He had hitherto carried on his negotiation agreeably to his instructions and the grand master's intentions; but he deviated afterwards from both, when he found that he might, by devoting himself to the court of Rome, get the profits of the priory to himself. The two pretenders to it being incapacitated by their age and infirmities to go in person and reside upon the priory, he got the stewardship of it from the pope. This was the first step he took; his next was to abandon openly the interests of his order, and without any sense of shame, to get himself named by the pontiff for their successor; so that the two knights living but a little while after this provision, he was the only person that reaped any advantage from their rivalry. All Rhodes was prodigiously surprised when they heard after, that their ambassador, instead of following his instructions, and opposing those nominations of the pope's, had been himself a solicitor, when he found an opportunity of obtaining them for himself.

THERE was no possibility after this of returning to the grand master ; Heredia was forced to stay at Avignon, and adhered entirely to the court of Rome. He soon formed himself a secret plan of all the intrigues and politics of that court, and conducted himself with such dexterity, that he had afterwards a great hand in the elections and the confidence of the popes.

NEWS being brought to Clement VI. that Philip de Valois king of France, and Edward III. king of England, were on the point of entering into war against one another, made choice of Heredia as a fit person to be sent to those two princes to perform in his name the office of a mediator between them. This knight, whose courage equalled his capacity, foreseeing that a bloody battle would infallibly be fought between them, got a permission from the pope to declare himself against either of the princes that should decline the mediation of the holy see. As Edward had been the aggressor, he went first to his camp, and gave him an account of his commission. He would fain have engaged him to a suspension of arms ; but he found the English prince so elated with some advantages that he had already obtained, that he could not prevail with him. When he saw that he rejected all proposals of peace with disdain, and even slighted his offices of mediation, the haughty Spaniard, provoked with the little deference shewn to his character, declared to him, that as his commission was at an end, by reason of his obstinacy in rejecting it, he would go and fight under the banners of the king of France. He acquainted him at the same time with the permission he had from the pope, and thereupon took leave of that prince, and threw himself into the French army, which was not long before it came to an engagement with the English.

THE unfortunate success of that day is but too well known ; the battle was fought near Crecy in Ponthieu. The French lost it by the treachery of some of their commanders, and by the precipitation of others. Philip shewed more valour than conduct in the action ; he was one of the last that staid

in the field, and he still fought it out, though he had but sixty horsemen cavaliers left about him ; but his horse being killed under him, he would infallibly have been taken by the enemy, had not Heredia leapt immediately off his own, and presented him to that prince, who retired out of the field along with him.

THE castellan seeing a body of foot that still kept on fighting, put himself at their head, and disputed the victory for some time with the English. But these battalions being at last overpowered by the victorious army, he was forced to take his fate in the general rout ; and as he was grievously wounded, it was with great difficulty that he got off, and came up with the scattered remains of the French army.

WHILST he lay under cure for four great wounds he had received in the battle, he was informed that they threw reflections on his conduct in the English camp ; and that some officers of that nation said, that he being invested with the character of an ambassador, could not fight on the French side without violating the law of nations. The knight, as soon as he was cured, sent an herald into their camp to challenge any one who should blemish his conduct ; and in all probability a private duel would have ensued, had not the king of England, whose leave was asked for that purpose, done him justice, by declaring that he had notified to him before the battle, the permission which the pope had given him at the bottom of his instructions, of fighting against either of the princes who should reject the conditions of peace which he was commissioned to propose. He afterwards set a negotiation on foot again, as they pretend ; and it is to him that historians ascribe a truce which the two kings agreed to for a year.

BUT be that matter as it will, he had the satisfaction, at his return to Avignon, of seeing the pope pleased with his conduct ; and Innocent VI. succeeding to Clement VI. Heredia's fortune became still more illustrious under the pontificate of a pope, to whom, as he had ever been a particular friend, he then became his minister and confidant.

INNOCENT, as the first marks of his favour, declared him governor of Avignon and the Comté Venaissin ; and, as if his favourite's fortune engrossed all his thoughts, he seemed entirely taken up with providing for his advancement. He was daily heaping new benefits upon him ; he was the channel thro' which all his favours were conveyed ; the greatest princes strove eagerly to gain his friendship, and he shared the power of the keys with his master ; or rather, the pope had the bare title, whilst his minister enjoyed all the authority of them.

By means of this boundless credit he amassed immense riches, part of which he employed in the settlement of his children whom he had left in Arragon. And to prevent the imputation of being ungrateful to his benefactor, and provide at the same time for the security of the pope and all his court, he was at the expence of building strong walls about the town of Avignon, fortifying them at proper distances with towers, which secured the place against a surprise, and put it in a condition of defence. The pope, delighted with these great and distinguishing expressions of his acknowledgments, plundered, as we may say, the order of the two great priories of Castile and St. Giles, to confer them upon his favourite, contrary to all the rules and privileges of that religious society, and in contempt of the important services which the order was doing continually to the Christian world, by the brave resistance they made against the infidels*.

THE death of this pope, who was succeeded immediately by Urban V. and afterwards by Gregory XI. was the occasion of his losing part of his credit, though his ambition continued as violent as ever ; and the grand master Julliac being grown very old, he consider-

ed

* Retulere etiam nobilem victoriam hospitalarii equites de Turcis in Græcia, quamvis longè numero impares : invecti enim quatuor tantum triremibus atque onerariâ, viginti novem barbarorum naves, dum in eas vicinorum agrorum pre^{re}das inferebant, intercepere, ut narrat Matthæus Villanus. Rain. ad ann. 1359. num.

ed that dignity as an honourable asylum against the insults of fortune and the disgraces of the court. He took his measures for it in good time; his friends at the court of Avignon exerted themselves strenuously in his favour; most of the European princes engaged in his interest, and recommended him to the knights who were born their subjects: so that upon Julliac's decease, the convent, however displeased at his conduct, was under a sort of necessity to chuse him for their grand master.

HEREDIA, as soon as he received the news of his election, prepared to set out for Rhodes; but as he had a mind to make his appearance there with forces that might keep up his reputation, and justify the choice of the order, he fitted out at his own expence nine gallies, besides other vessels of different bulk, on board of which he embarked a great number of volunteers, whom he took into his pay. He was ready to set sail, when he found himself obliged to delay his departure at the request of pope Gregory XI. who had just before been chosen successor to Urban, and was for making use of him and his fleet on a great design which he had for some time revolved in his thoughts, and then thought fit to put in execution.

NEAR seventy years had passed, as we have seen, since the holy see had been translated to Avignon by pope Clement V. During this long absence, though the popes pretended to be sovereigns of Rome, that capital of the world was then governed by a magistrate, who took the title of senator^a, and by twelve other citizens, who were called bannerets, from the different banners which they set up to distinguish themselves in their several quarters. Their design, as they endeavoured to persuade the Romans, was to set up the old commonwealth again in Rome; but what they then called Romans were very different from those illustrious republicans, so renowned for the greatness of their sentiments, as well as for their singular valour, which had made them masters of a great part of the universe. These last Romans were only a confused medley, and

^a Glossaire de Ducange, t. 3. p. 796:

a miserable remnant of the Heruli, Goths, Lombards, and other Barbarians, who in the precedent ages had over-run Italy. From the time that Rome was become the capital of the popes, the greatness of soul of the old Romans, their awful love of liberty, their valour and intrepidity, were degenerated into the narrow ambition of attaining the first dignities of the church.

THE study of the laws was the only way to such preferments. Rome, peopled, as it were, with ecclesiastics, was scarce ever free from cabals: these divisions occasioned their weakness; and the inhabitants of new Rome had scarce any thing of the Romans but the bare name. Besides, that great city, since the popes had quitted it, was little more than a country place, and that golden stream, which before used to flow in from all the states of Christendom, had been turned into another channel, and ran directly into the pope's court. Most of the other places of St. Peter's patrimony were either seized on by petty tyrants, or else, under the specious pretences of liberty, had entered into an alliance with the Florentines, who were then making war upon the pope himself, and ravaging the Campagna di Roma.

GREGORY XI. had employed the arms of the church against them; they had been publicly excommunicated by a solemn bull; and as they did not seem much affected with it, the pope had sent an army into Italy under the command of cardinal Robert of Geneva, as legate of the holy see. But the pontiff not meeting with all the success he expected, had again recourse to spiritual arms; and to make them cut the deeper, he had sharpened them as it were after a new and extraordinary manner. He not only aggravated the former excommunication, thundered out against the Florentines, but he involved in it all the faithful that should hold any commerce with them, or supply them with gold, silver, corn, wine, provisions, wool, cloth, and even with wood to burn: and moreover, says the pope, "we confisicate all the effects of the Florentines, and enjoin every body to attack them, to seize their persons,

" sons, to make them slaves, and reduce them to a
" state of servitude."

THIS bull had all the effect that the avarice of men, animated by the pious credulity of those times, could expect from it. Every body made it a merit to persecute these poor excommunicated people, and to seize their effects wherever they could discover them. The commerce of the Florentines, in which their main strength lay, was entirely ruined ; their debtors refused even to pay them ; and in foreign countries, particularly in England, several of their merchants were arrested by the king's orders, and made slaves.

THE Florentines laid down their arms, and sent ambassadors to the pope to bring him to temper ; but not being able to obtain a repeal of this terrible bull, they had recourse to St. Catharine of Sienna, a nun of the order of St. Dominic, famous over all Italy for her piety, and especially for some revelations and intimate communications with heaven, which she took care to publish, tho' it must be owned they are a little extraordinary.

THE she-saint, at the request of the Florentines her neighbours, embarked for Provence, and arrived safe at Avignon. She saw the pope, and in an audience she had of him, made him such warm instances in behalf of the Florentines, that she obtained the repealing of his bull, though the pontiff had told her, that she would find herself deluded by those merchants. This was not the only important commission she had taken : The Romans, deprived of the profit they used to reap from the residence of the popes and cardinals, and the continual concourie of so many strangers as had business at the pope's court, had secretly sent deputies to Avignon, conjuring the pope to return to the capital of the Christian world. To determine him to do so, they made protestations of acknowledging him for their sovereign, and preserving an inviolable fidelity to him and his successors. St. Catherine employed all her credit to second their request : she represented to the pope, that his presence would quiet all the troubles of Italy, and

and that by fixing the holy see again at Rome, he would likewise fix again its authority in all the places that had been seized upon by usurpers.

PETER, infant of Arragon, a Franciscan friar, and St. Bridget, pressed him likewise to return to his church; but what absolutely determined the pope to quit Provence and return to Rome, was the advice he received by an express from the cardinal of St. Peter, who was then resident at Rome as his vicegerent, that the Romans, if he did not return speedily, had resolved to elect another pope, and had even made sure of the abbot of Mont Cassin, a monk not over scrupulous, who, without being startled at the guilt that is inseparable from schism, had agreed with them to act the infamous part of an anti-pope.

GREGORY, terrified at a project which was going to raise a competitor for his dignity, resolved to prevent such a misfortune by a speedy return into Italy. His own father and mother, William count of Beaufort and his wife, who were still living, and who indeed survived him, used the most tender intreaties, but all in vain, to keep him in Provence. King Charles V.^a likewise foreseeing the fatal consequences that this precipitate journey would occasion to the church, wrote to him in the most pressing terms, in order to divert him from it. " You are going, holy father, says that prince " to him, into a country where you are but very little " beloved ; if you die there, as is probable enough " you will, the Romans will get all the cardinals into " their power ; and to prevent the court of Rome's " returning to Avignon, will force them by dint of " arms to elect an Italian pope."

BUT notwithstanding all the pressing instances of that prince, and of most of the cardinals who plied him with representations of the seditious and mutinous temper of the people of Rome, the pope was inflexible being possessed with the remonstrances and advice of St. Catherine, and the other devout persons abovementioned. He left Avignon, and went to embark at Marseilles on board the gallies of the order,

which were commanded by the new grand master Heredia in person, who had with him the priors of St. Giles, England and Rome, and a considerable number of the knights and commanders of the order.

PETER AMELIO, bishop of Senigallia, who was in this voyage, has given us an exact relation and journal of it, which Abraham Bzovius has taken care to preserve. That prelate represents the grand master with a large white beard, holding the rudder of the pope's galley, and surrounded with all his knights. The same historian too acquaints us, that this little fleet being dispersed by a storm off of the coast of Provence, the grand master by his resolution and skill in the art of navigation, baffled the violence of the winds, and brought the pope safe into the port of Ostia.

THE pontiff, before he made his entry into Rome, got from them, for his own security, and pursuant to the promises made by the magistrates, a declaration, wherein they, in the name of the people of Rome, acknowledged him for sovereign of the city, and all the territory belonging to it. He was afterwards received there in great solemnity with all his court ; the grand master going immediately before his holiness, carrying the standard of the church. The magistrates with a crowd of people at their heels, proclaimed the general joy with loud acclamations ; but it was soon found that there was more show and pomp in these outward submissions than fidelity and real obedience ; and that the senator and banerets would not easily give up the authority they had usurped.

THE grand master having acquitted himself with so much honour in convoying the pope, took his leave, went with all his knights on board the fleet, and set sail for Rhodes, where all the convent expected him with great impatience. As he was pursuing his course, he met off of the coast of Morea a fleet of Venetians, who were then in war against the Turks : those Barbarians had a little before taken the town of Patras, so famous for its silk trade, from that republic. The Venetian general coming on board the grand master's galley

galley to pay him his compliments, as he knew his valour and capacity in the art of war, he conjured him in the name of his republic, and for the common good of Christendom, to consent to join their forces for recovering a place of that importance out of the hands of the infidels. Tho' affairs of great consequence required the grand master's presence at Rhodes, whither he was going to take possession of his dignity ; yet his courage prevailed over his interest, and he embraced with joy an occasion of signalizing his warlike talents against the eternal enemies of his order. The two fleets joined, and landing their troops, they marched straight to Patras, a town situated on an eminence, about a quarter of a league's distance from the sea.

As the place had but few fortifications, and took up a great compass of ground, the grand master tried to take it by scalado ; ladders were laid against those places in the walls that were almost ruined, and he took it without any great resistance. The governor had reserved his garrison for the defence of the castle, into which he retired along with it. The castle was seated in the highest part of the town, and wanted none of the fortifications which art had at that time invented to render it impregnable.

It was necessary to besiege it in a regular manner ; the attacks were smart and vigorous, and the defence was as brave. The order lost several knights of distinction ; but at last the machines made use of in those times, having made a breach, the grand master impatient of so long a resistance, takes a ladder, claps it to the breach, mounts up first sword in hand, and without minding whether he was followed or no, throws himself into the place. The governor on his side opposes his progress with great courage ; a sort of duel ensues between them, till the Christian, more expert or else stronger than the infidel, runs him thro', kills him, cuts off his head, whilst his knights, uncertain of his fate, mount up the breach in crowds to his succour, bear down all before them, and breaking into the place, put the garrison to the sword.

THE grand master flushed with this good success, and invigorated by the interested praises of the Venetian general, took up a resolution to extend his conquests over all the Morea. Corinth was the first place to be attacked ; it was resolved, in a council of war, to take it from the infidels, and the christian army advanced into the territory about it to besiege it. The grand master however, before he sat down before the place, had a mind to view the situation and condition of it himself. But as the convoy he took with him was weak, he fell unhappily into an ambuscade ; the Turks cut his small corps in pieces and took him prisoner. The infidels thought they had only taken a private knight ; but some deserters discovering his quality to them, they sent him to the castle of Corinth, where they kept him under a strict guard.

THE grand priors of St. Giles, England and Rome, who had followed him in this expedition, offered, with the Venetian general's consent, to give Patras for his ransom ; but the Turks rejecting the proposal returned a proud answer, that being masters of the Morea they knew how to recover that place in less time than the Christians had employed in reducing it. The knights inconsolable for the reproach they might lie under of having left their grand master behind them in the hands of the infidels, offered besides Patras, a very considerable sum, and the three grand priors in hostage to be kept till the whole was paid.

THE Turks seemed to come into this last proposal ; but when they acquainted the grand master with it, he generously opposed it, and would never consent that the three grand priors should be put into the infidels hands as hostages on his account, saying, “ Let me “ alone, my dear brethren, suffer an useless old man, “ that cannot live much longer, to die in prison : and “ do you that are younger, reserve yourselves to be “ serviceable to the order.” In vain did his knights, who had got leave to see him, labour by their prayers and tears to gain his consent for this exchange ; nothing could shake his resolution. He would not even allow

allow his ransom to be paid out of the treasury of the order : " if it must be paid said he, my family hath received estate enough from me to give this proof of their gratitude." The Turks, regardless of so noble a generosity, sent him into the mountains of Albania, to oblige him to be the more expeditious in paying his ransom. He was there shut up in a close prison, and instead of enjoying his new dignity at Rhodes, he was kept above three years in a rigorous slavery, where he had time enough to make serious reflections on the little solidity of human grandeur.

DURING his captivity a furious schism broke out, which distracted the church for above fifty years afterwards ; the order of St. John having the misfortune to be involved in it, as well as all the states and other orders of Christendom. We have seen how pope Gregory XI. prevailed upon, by the promises and pretended submissions of the Romans, and seduced, if I may be allowed the expression, by the confidence he had in St. Catherine's predictions, had quitted Provence, and fixed his residence at Rome, the natural seat of all the sovereign pontiffs.

BUT he had not continued long there, before he had the mortification to find, that the spirit of rebellion was still reigning in that city ; and the magistrates, in contempt of the most solemn oaths, far from paying the obedience which they owed him, had resumed their first authority and perpetuated themselves in the government. The just reason he had to fear, lest after his death these mutineers should tyrannize over the conclave, and force it to elect whom they pleased for his successor, made him take the resolution of returning to Avignon. But being seized with a sudden illness which carried him off, a little before he died, holding the holy sacrament in his hands, he conjured all the cardinals, who assisted him in those his last moments, to chuse that person for his successor whom they should find most worthy of that great dignity. He cautioned them against giving credit to certain persons of both sexes, who under colour of pretended revelations, pro-

posed their own visions as a rule of conduct to be observed in the government of the church; which by the too great confidence he had therein, joined with the seditious temper of the Romans, was going to expose the church to the danger of a terrible schism, if the Saviour of the world did not of his infinite goodness interpose to preserve his spouse from it ^a.

'Tis plain whom the holy pontiff meant in this discourse: and his apprehensions were unhappily justified by the event, and proved truer than the predictions and prophecies which had imposed on him.

For as soon as his eyes were closed, the bannerets and magistrates of the city, for fear a new pope should translate the holy see to Avignon, resolved to oppose the election of a French cardinal, and to force the members of the conclave to chuse a Roman, or at least an Italian for pope.

WITH this view they seized and put guards at the gates of the city, as in a garrison and time of war, for fear the cardinals should get out unknown to them and retire to some city of Italy, where they might proceed with freedom to the election of a pope.

THIS seditious gang drove afterwards out of Rome, all well designing persons, and such as could oppose the violence they were offering to the cardinals; and then let in a company of banditti and peasants of the neighbouring mountains, a savage set of men, whom they supplied with arms, and who running over all quarters of the city, threatned a general massacre, if they did not chuse a Roman, or at least an Italian, for pope. "Romano lo volemo, ó al manco Italiano," was the cry of these furious wretches, to whom the dregs of the people joined themselves, and to which they were secretly instigated by the magistrates.

THE disorder did not end with this tumult; for when the cardinals, after the ten first days employed about

^a Quia per tales ipse seductus, dimisso suorum rationabili consilio se traxerat, & ecclesiam in discrimen schismatis imminentis, nisi misericorditer provideret sponsus Iesus. Gerson. exam. doct. part 2. Wading. ann. minor. l. 4.

about the funeral of the deceased pope were passed, prepared to go into the conclave ; the seditious seized on the doors, and declared, that if they resolved to chuse a foreign cardinal for pope, “ they would make “ their heads redder than their hats^a; ” and to hasten the election of an Italian, the most furious among them piled up faggots of vine twigs and straw under the place where the cardinals were assembled, as if they were ready to set it on fire. Others struck against the floor with pikes and halberts ; and in order to force them to comply, they presented death before them in several shapes ; all of them equally frightful and terrible.

THE cardinals, says an historian of that time, chusing rather to be ranked in the number of the confessors than that of the martyrs, did, to save their own lives, and pacify these furious wretches, agree to name an Italian for pope. But before they proceeded to an election so visibly extorted from them by violence, the foreign cardinals, and even some of the Italians, made a protest before public notaries, that the election was extorted from them, and that they did it only to avoid an immediate death ; and that when they should be free and in a place of safety, they would proceed to a new and more canonical election. They afterwards named for pope Bartholomew Prignano, a Neapolitan, archbishop of Bari. They made so unexpected a choice, in hopes that this prelate, who was looked upon as the most learned man in all Italy in canon law, and was likewise an eye-witness of the violence offered them, would not make use of it to maintain himself in a dignity to which he had not been raised according to the rules of the church. Some historians go so far as to say, that when he saw the violence used against the cardinals, not imagining that he should reap the benefit of it himself, he said to one of his friends, who was then with him in S. Peter's church, “ that he would never acknowledge any one for pope, “ whom the cardinals should be forced to chuse with “ daggers at their throats.”

BUT

^a Froissart, t. 2, ch. 12.

BUT when those princes of the church had sent to fetch him, in order to notify his election to him, he received the news at first with great surprise : but these first sentiments soon made way for those of joy ; and ambition made him readily give his consent. In vain did the cardinals, after this forced election, solicit him to leave Rome, under pretence, as they said, of ratifying his nomination in a free place ; the ambitious Neapolitan, far from giving into the snare, declared that he looked upon his election as lawful and regular, and to hinder the cardinals from repeating it, had recourse to sedition ; and made use of it to keep them in Rome, notwithstanding all their endeavours to leave it. They were forced by a new violence to assist in person at his taking possession of the pontifical chair, and the ceremony of his coronation, when he took the name of Urban VI.

THIS was not all he exacted of the cardinals * ; he obliged them to write letters to the principal potentates of Christendom, to certify that his election was free and canonical. The cardinals who saw themselves every day, as it were, in a state between life and death, to satisfy a man whom they considered as their tyrant, signed whatever he required of them, but gave private notice at the same time to several princes, particularly to Charles V. king of France, that they should not mind what they wrote so long as they were in Rome. Their design was to get out of town, and they got leave at last on pretence of the great heat. But instead of retiring to their respective country houses, most of the foreign cardinals that were in Italy went by concert to Anagni, from whence they wrote to the king of France and all the princes of Christendom to inform them of the violent manner in which they had been forced to put the archbishop of Bari in the chair of St. Peter, transmitting at the same time an exact account of all that had passed at Rome since the death of Gregory XI. with authentic copies of their protests. They

wrote

* Theol. de

wrote likewise to the new pope, representing to him, that nobody was better acquainted than himself with the defects of his election ; that being an eye-witness of the violence offered them, he could not but be sensible that he was no true pope ; and they conjured him, in the most pressing terms, generously to quit a dignity, which he could not keep any longer without exposing the church by his ambition to the terrible calamities of schism, for which he would be accountable to the divine justice.

URBAN rejected their exhortation and entreaties with disdain, and treated them as rebels and schismatics. He seemed afterwards to be a little mollified, and to bring them back to his court, offered them a general pardon, which the event shewed would have been ill observed, had they suffered themselves to be imposed on by his promises. The cardinals, from a principle of conscience, as we may suppose, retired to Fondi, a strong place in the kingdom of Naples ; and for their security, got a guard of foreign troops, Gascoons and Bretons, which Gregory XI. had taken into his service for the defence of St. Peter's patrimony. 'Twas in this town that they proceeded anew to the electing of a pope, and after shutting themselves up in a conclave, cardinal Robert of Geneva, brother to Amé count of Geneva was at the first scrutiny elected by the unanimous voices of a majority of the college of cardinals, and was afterwards crowned by the name of Clement VII.

THE two popes soon made the schism notorious by the anathema's which they thundered out reciprocally against one another, and against all that followed the opposite party. All the princes of Christendom were divided on one side or other in this famous dispute, some adhering to Urban, and others owning the authority of Clement. Nor were there wanting on either side famous universities, eminent divines, learned canonists, and even persons of great sanctity, famous, as is pretended, for their gift of miracles, to declare in favour of the opposite parties, as if God almighty were

not

not willing it should be known which of the two was the lawful pope.

THIS spirit of division spread itself into the order of St. John and infected the knights : the grand master Heredia being ransomed by his own family out of the hands of the infidels, and all the convent of Rhodes declared in favour of Clement², and the languages of Italy and England, with several commanders of Germany, acknowledged Urban. This pope, to have his revenge against the grand master, declared that he had forfeited his dignity ; and not being able prevail with the convent to elect another in his stead, he named brother Richard Coracciolo prior of Capua for grand master by his own authority. Thus were there at the same time two grand masters in the order, as there were two popes in the church. But excepting Italy and England, and some commanders in Germany, as we said before, all the rest of the order adhered inviolably to the authority of Clement, and continued subject to the government of Heredia.

THIS grand master, who was formerly grasping so much at riches and honours, had, whilst he was in captivity among the infidels, time enough to reflect on the vanity of all human grandeur. Adversity, a severe but useful mistress, returned him back to his order, a disinterested and modest man, full of zeal, over-actuated by the spirit of his profession, strict as to his own conduct, and without any view but the good of his order, the maintenance of discipline, and his own satisfaction.

DURING his captivity, and a year before he was ransomed, brother Bertrand de Flotte, a grand commander, and the grand master's lieutenant, had held a general chapter at Rhodes, in which several regulations were made, which would have

² Rhodiorum pariter equitum magister schismatis laqueis se irretiit, ut queritur Urbanus, qui ob eam rem vectigalia que in Germania Rhodio magistro pendebantur, pontificio fisco inferri jussit. Rain. ad ann. 1387. num. 10.

have been useful, if there had been authority enough in the government to enforce the observance of them. It was there enacted, that the collations which the grand master and council should make of the commandries of Europe, should be received with submission, notwithstanding the pretensions of some priors who had assumed to themselves a right of naming to those commandries that fell vacant within their priories; that the great estate which composed the commandry of Cyprus should be divided into seven portions and seven commandries, and that the first of the seven parts should go by the name of great commandry, with the right and title of grand cross; and that the other six should devolve upon the knights according to their seniority, and be subject to the jurisdiction of the grand commander; that the commander of the isle of Coos or Langos should be obliged to maintain twenty five knights, and every knight of the order should be bound to keep an horse and his equipage, exercise himself in shooting with a cross-bow, and be always in a readiness to march upon the orders of his superiors; and if he failed, should be deprived of the allowance and pension on that he received from the treasury.

To these regulations several articles were added, relating to the conduct of the grand masters, to oblige them to a strict residence at Rhodes. It had been enacted, that they should not confer any dignity, nor give away any commandry out of the convent: and to prevent an abuse which was introduced insensibly by the grand masters, who sollicited at the court of Rome, to be eased of the burthen of their dignity; a statute was made, that when a grand master was worn out with years, or on account of his infirmities had a mind to abdicate the grand mastership, he should not be allowed to resign it, unless he did it to the general chapter or the convent at the head of the order, who had the sole right of providing him a successor.

THE grand master, having in the mean time paid his ransom, came to Rhodes, where he took possession of

of his dignity and government. He thereupon caused
an estimate to be laid before him of the reve-
1381. nues of the order and the state of the treasury :
two things very necessary for the preservation
and defence of the isles and places belonging to the or-
der in the Mediterranean sea, and on the coasts adjoining ;
and he was very sensibly afflicted, when he found
that in the time of his captivity a destructive anarchy
had, by the favour of the sultan, crept into the order,
and that most of the knights, especially the priors and
commanders, had made themselves independent, and
acted as they saw fit, without any regard to their ob-
ligations. Some of them paid no deference to the or-
ders of the council, any further than they found their
own present interest promoted by them. Those of the
North scarce kept up any correspondence at all with
the convent ; they did not make good their responsions,
or else paid but a very small part of them ; and as the
order was obliged to furnish subsistence and pay to the
soldiers that were in garrison in the fortresses belonging
to the knights, they had been forced to borrow con-
siderable sums, the bare interest of which swallowed up
all the revenues they could draw from Rhodes.

THE grand master conferring with the council about
the distressed condition of the order, and the difficul-
ties of providing a suitable remedy, the council was of
opinion, that nothing but a superior authority, such as
that of the pope, could correct such great disorders.
They entreated the grand master to go to Avignon,
where pope Clement resided ; but as they were appre-
hensive he might stay too long in a court where he had
spent part of his life, and still remembered, that whilst
he was in favour with several popes, he had diverted
most of the responsions of France and Spain to his own
profit, the council, before he embarked, required him
to take a solemn oath, that he would pay all the mon-
ey that he received from the responsions of the order
into the public treasury ; and in order to bring him
back the sooner, that he should not, during his ab-
sence, nominate to any dignity of the order, as had been
resolved

resolved in the last chapter held at Rhodes during the time of his captivity.

THE council carried their precautions still farther, and under pretence of providing him an honourable attendance, they sent with him Bertrand de Flotte grand commander, Buisson prior of the church of Rhodes, Eston de Slegleolts commander of Friburg, and William de Fontenai commander of Espaillons, all of them knights truly zealous for the observance of the statutes, and who resolved to maintain them inviolably : but the event shewed how needless these precautions were, and that the grand master, after his advancement to that dignity, had no other view in all his actions but the good of his order. 'Twas this motive that engaged him, before he set out, to appoint brother Peter de Culant marshal of the order to be his lieutenant at Rhodes, a gentleman as much distinguished by his illustrious birth as by his singular valour. The grand master, upon his arrival at Avignon, having paid his duty to the pope, and taken the oath of obedience, represented to him the deplorable condition the order was reduced to, by means of the unhappy schism that had infected it, and deprived the public treasury of the responsions of the schismatical commanders ; that even the commanders who continued subject to his authority, were scarce more exact in their duty to the order, and were still making use of one excuse or other to keep from paying that just and necessary tribute, and that they were afraid of pressing them on this article, for fear lest the spirit of avarice, that possessed them, should make them fancy it no dishonour, whilst the schism still kept up its head, to change sides under pretence of chusing the right one. Clement entered into his views, and agreed, that in such a juncture there was no dealing with them, nor means of reclaiming them, but by gentle methods ; for which purpose the pontiff, by his authority, called several chapters, one after another, at Valence and Avignon, and in the castellany of Emposta for Spain.

THE grand master presided in all these assemblies, and laboured still more effectually by his example than he could by his discourses, to revive a spirit of union and charity in his knights. Several seemed really concerned ; some engaged to go away immediately for Rhodes ; others offered to pay the arrears of their responsions. But as these supplies were neither present nor considerable enough, by reason of the schism in the order, and that Rhodes and Smyrna were equally threatened with a siege by Bajazet I. sultan of the Turks, the grand master generously sacrificed part of his great estate to the succour of the order, and sent at different times, ships loaden with arms and provisions to Rhodes and Smyrna, taking care in the same manner to remit considerable sums thither for paying the soldiers in their service.

'TWAS from the same spirit of piety, and perhaps from a motive of penance and restitution, that he employed the great fortune he had acquired before his being raised to the grand mastership, in founding at Capfa and Rubulo in Arragon, a commandry for his knights, and a collegiate church of twelve priests for the chaplains of the order, annexing thereto for ever for their subsistence, the manor of Exariel, and a moiety of the revenues of the castle of St. Peter.

BROTHER Richard Caracciolo prior of Capua, whom pope Urban VI. by virtue of his own authority, had nominated grand master in Heredia's stead, desirous of imitating this liberality of his, founded, at his own expence, a famous monastery of religious ladies of the order, in the city of Florence, by the title of the nuns of St. John.

DAME Perrere Viviani was the first commandress of this convent ; and no young lady could be admitted into it till she had first produced proofs of her noble descent, which were to be examined by the prior of Pisa, under the direction of the grand master. Caracciolo enjoyed that title with respect to Italy and England during his life ; but upon his death, Boniface IX. who, during the schism, had succeeded

to Urban VI. foreseeing that if he should provide him a successor, he would never be owned by the soundest part of the order, for their grand master, to Heredia's prejudice ; contented himself, as if the grand mastership had been vacant, with disposing only of the title of lieutenant to brother Boniface of Carmandre, his own relation. But excepting Italy and England, as was before observed, the whole order adhered inviolably to the grand master, whose great qualities commanded their respect and reverence. This prince died that very year at Avignon, in a very old age, after having governed his order nineteen years and eight months. His body was carried to the church of Capsa, which he himself had founded, and became afterwards the head of a bailiwick.

March
1396.

In his private life he distinguished himself as much in the quality of a great captain, as in that of a skilful courtier ; was grasping at wealth and honours, and sacrificing every thing in order to raise his family ; and purchased in his son John Ferdinand d'Heredia's name, the castles and lands of Mora and Valbonne, several other manors, and among the rest the county of Fuente, which his descendants enjoy at this day. But after he arrived at the grand mastership, he became disinterested, liberal and magnificent, zealous for the support of discipline, and especially for the defence of the rights and privileges of the order, which he had formerly so openly violated, in order to aggrandize himself. We have some excellent laws, or rather wise ordinances, instituted by him, still preserved in the book of statutes, which shew his zeal and great capacity in government. He had learned from his own faults, of which ambition was the source, how to prevent those of his successors. From the time that he became grand master, he was, as we may say, another man ; and it were to be wished, either that he had never entered into the order, or that the condition of human nature would have allowed him to have always continued in the government of it.

THE
HISTORY
OF THE
Knights Hospitallers
O F
St. JOHN of JERUSALEM,
Styled afterwards,
The KNIGHTS of Rhodes,
And at present,
The KNIGHTS of MALTA.

BOOK VI.

WHEN the news of the grand master Heredia's death arrived at Rhodes, the knights that were then in the island assembled in a body to provide him a successor. Their choice fell upon brother Philebert de Naillac, grand prior of Aquitain, a gentleman equally esteemed for his wisdom and valour.
1397.

The order indeed, during the schism, which divided it as well as the whole Christian church, stood in need of a chief of his consummate prudence; nor was he less serviceable to it in the wars it was afterwards obliged to maintain against most of the eastern princes.

SCARCE had the new prince of Rhodes taken possession of his dignity, when he was sollicited to enter in-

to

to a league against Bajazet the first of the name, and fifth sultan of the race of the Ottoman Turks^a, who threatened Hungary with a cruel invasion. Sigismond, of the house of Luxemburg, and son to the emperor Charles IV. was then upon the throne of that kingdom in right of queen Mary his wife, a prince, whom adversity and the various disgraces he had passed through in his youth, had rendered very skilful in the arts of government, but he was a much better politician than a general. The ravages which the Turks made almost every year on the frontiers of his territories, obliged him to make application to the pope for succours. The pontiff, for that purpose, formed a powerful league against the infidels, in which he engaged Charles VI. king of France, Philip the Hardy, duke of Burgundy, the republic of Venice, and the knights of Rhodes. Manuel, emperor of Constantinople, desired to be comprehended in it ; and several petty Christian princes, as well Latins as Greeks, sued for the same favour, but very little succour came from their side ; and their names were of no other use than to increase the number of signatures that were put at the bottom of this famous treaty. Charles VI. alone furnished more troops than all the other allies put together. They pretend that there went out of France, upon this expedition, above a thousand knights with banners, or cheftains of companies, and more than a thousand esquires, who generously abandoned their country in a warmth of zeal to signalize their courage against Bajazet.

THAT infidel prince was the son of Amurath I. whom a slave of Lazarus, Despot of Servia^b, stabbed in the midst of his guards, to revenge the death of his master, whom the barbarous sultan had taken in an engagement, and caused to be strangled in his presence^c. Bajazet, before the news of his father's death became public, obliged a secretary of state to write a letter in his father's name to prince

Q.3

Giacup

^a Abu-Jesid-Benmorad-Gazi.^b Histoire des Turcs, t. 1. p. 45. chez Foppens.^c Laon. C halcondyl. t. 1.

Giacup his brother, to come immediately to him. The unfortunate prince, having no notion of the cruel destiny that was to befall him there, came to Adrianople, where Bajazet, to get rid of a rival in the empire, ordered him to be strangled with a bow-string, a fatal instrument, which most of his successors, out of a pretended scruple of shedding blood so precious as that of the Ottoman race, have generally made use of to dispatch the princes of their family.

BAJAZET, freed from a competitor, applied himself to secure the dominions left him by his father, and enlarge them by new conquests. He was a prince full of fire, of a courage equal to his ambition, warm, bold, and enterprizing; always on horseback and in the field, thirsting after the blood of his enemies, and prodigal of that of his own soldiers. He looked upon the art of making one's self feared, as the surest rule in politics*. He first fell upon Bulgaria, and the sovereign of the country falling by the fate of war into his hands, he caused him to be immediately strangled. He next ravaged Bosnia and Croatia, carrying off more captives than he left inhabitants. Macedonia was not exempted from the fury of his incursions; and he fell down from thence upon the Morea, reduced part of it, and on the side of Constantinople, forced his way through to the very walls of the city. He would willingly have besieged it in form, but not having a number of forces sufficient for so great an enterprize, he only blocked up that capital of the Greek empire, with several detachments of troops, which he posted in different quarters about it.

He went to finish in Asia, the campaign he had begun so successfully in Europe. Passing the Hellespont, he over-ran Cappadocia and Phrygia, with the same rapidity, and without distinguishing the princes of his own, from those of the Christian religion. He attacked Aladin, sultan of Cilicia, but finding too much resistance on that side, he turned his arms against some pet-

* Philippi Loniceri *Turcica. Hist. I. I.*

ty princes of the Turcomans, of the old Selgeucidian race, called Ethein-Sarkhan-Mendez-Teko, and Martin, who were possessed of different districts of Anatolia, and plundered them of their dominions. Could he but made himself master of their persons with the same facility, he would have given them no better treatment than he did the king of Bulgaria: but those princes knowing his bloody temper, took a seasonable refuge at the court of Tamerlane, the great Cham of Tartary, another conqueror, who had reduced Persia, Mesopotamia, and a great part of Syria.

BAJAZET, after these expeditions, left prince Ortogules his son, in Asia, at Bursa, the capital of his dominions, to shew his subjects at once the authority of his own reign, and the expectations of his successors. He returned afterwards into Europe, and fixed his residence at Adrianople, from whence he ravaged Attica and Thessaly, conquered part of Macedonia, defeated the prince of Wallachia, and forced him to submit to pay him tribute. The rapidity of his incursions allowed no time to oppose them, which gained him the surname of Ilderim, i. e. the thunder or the storm. A small body of his troops, detached from the body of his army, advancing on the side of Delphos, Theudelinda, the widow of Don Louis Davalos, whose predecessors had seized on that little state, fearing to be besieged by that conqueror, went out to visit him at a distance, and in his camp made him magnificent presents, and presented him her daughter, who passed for one of the greatest beauties of the east. The charms of the young princess disarmed Bajazet, who valued this conquest more than he did that of Delphos. He left Theudelinda mistress of it, and brought away her daughter with him in exchange. At the end of the campaign he ravaged the frontiers of Hungary, destroying all before him with fire and sword. They say, that as he retired, he sent back some prisoners to Sigismond, charging them to tell that prince, by way of an insulting threat, that he would return the next spring to visit him, and when he had drove him

out of his dominions, would pass into Italy, as far as Rome ; would plant his standards on the top of the capitol, and feed his horse with oats upon the very altar of St. Peter.

THE pope, alarmed with these threats, published a sort of crusade against that infidel prince, which was the occasion of the league above mentioned. The Greek emperor, the Venetians, and the knights of Rhodes, put a strong fleet to sea, under the command of the noble Thomas Mocenigo, who lay off the mouth of the Danube all the campaign, whilst the king of Hungary made all the nobility and gentry of his country, as well as the militia of the nation, take the field. France alone, as we have already observed, furnished more regular troops than all the other allies together ; and when they were ready to march, the king gave the command of that body to John count of Nevers, eldest son to the duke of Burgundy. Philip d'Artois, a lord of the blood^a, as the stile was at that time, and constable of the kingdom, went with that young prince ; and there were in the same army the count de la Marche, Henry and Philip de Bar, all three related to the king ; John de Vienne, admiral of France, the marshal de Boucicault, the sire de Coucy, one of the most considerable lords of the kingdom, and yet more distinguished by his admirable valour than his riches ; Guy

1397. de la Tremouille, the seigniors of Koye, St.

Paul, Montorel and Sampi, and in a manner all the most illustrious youth of France, who were inflamed with an eager desire of coming to an engagement with the infidels.

THIS French crusade marched through Germany, and as they passed through Bavaria and Austria, were joined by brother Frederic, count of Zollern, grand prior of Germany, at the head of the knights of his nation. All these troops came into Hungary about the same time that the grand master arrived there from Rhodes, followed by the principal commanders, and a great number of knights of his order. Sigismond, who

knew

knew their valour, declared that he would fight at their head, lodged them in his own quarter, and kept the grand master near his person.

BAJAZET was at this time in Anatolia, tho' others say he was encamped near Constantinople, his troops continuing the blockade of that place; and though he was informed of the mighty succours arrived in Hungary, yet he made no motion at all; whether he confid'd in the valour of the governors, whom he had put in the principal places of his frontiers, or would allow time for the impetuosity of the French to cool, or perhaps flattered himself that jealousy and dissensions would not fail to break out soon in so vast a body as the Christian army, composed of different nations; and that the change of air and diet, and the difficulty of getting provisions, might occasion sickness in the camp; in fine, whatever were his motives, he like a wise prince, resolved at first to try what time would produce in his favour. The only precaution he took was to keep the Christians from knowing any thing of his march, and whether he was still in Europe or Asia. The allies having no news of him, passed the Danube, entered Bulgaria, took some little places, and on a particular occasion, a party consisting only of French, and commanded by the sire de Coucy, cut to pieces the troops which the sultan had left in the country, who had advanced to disturb the Christians in their foraging. This trifling advantage, the number and valour of the Christian troops, the facility they had afterwards in sending out the parties on all sides, puffed up the soldiery with presumption; the very generals were infected with that dangerous poison of a too favourable fortune, and Bajazet was not talked of but with contempt.

THEY said that he was lurking in the farther part of Asia; the marshal de Boucicault maintained in council that he durst not pass the Hellespont; and an Hungarian historian relates^a, that Sigismond seeing himself at the head of an hundred thousand men, of which

sixty

^a Bonfin. rer. Hung. Dec. 3. l. 2. p. 379.

sixty thousand were horse, most of them men of arms, bragged that he would not only drive the Turks out of Europe, but that if the sky should fall, his soldiers were numerous enough to bear it up with the points of their lances.

THIS confidence, rash in itself, and ever dangerous in the event, made him undertake the siege of Nicopolis, a strong place, defended by a numerous garrison, commanded by Dogamberg, one of Bajazet's principal captains. This Turkish officer soon made the Christians sensible, by his frequent sallies, that it was much easier to ravage the open country, than to take a place, the government of which had been put into his hands; there were fresh combats every day, and the Christians did not gain an inch of ground but what cost them the lives of their bravest soldiers. This vigorous resistance weakened the army of the allies considerably, whilst luxury and debauchery, two enemies yet more dangerous than the Turks, infected all the camp, which, by the young gentry, was made a place of public prostitution. It looked as if they thought the pious motive of their expedition was a sufficient dispensation to authorise their violating with impunity the most essential obligations of Christianity^a. The French especially passed whole days with common prostitutes, and in pleasures as scandalous as they were easy to be obtained. The soldiery, by their example, drowned themselves as it were in wine, and their drunkenness could not even be moderated by their indigence; they passed away every moment like so many bacchanals, which scandalized even the very Turks, as well as the Christians that inhabited the country. This looseness in military discipline, and the little care taken by the commanders to send out parties for intelligence, allowed Bajazet time to advance with great secrecy to the succour of the place besieged; he was but a day's march off when the Christians believed him still in Anatolia. Some soldiers that had straggled out for pillage were the first that brought the account that the sultan

^a Hist. Anon. de S. Denis, l. 16. c. 10.

tan was within six leagues of the camp ; they were eager to carry the first intelligence of it to the generals. Marshal de Boucicault, still ridiculously possessed with his first notion, and that the Turks durst not venture a battle, rejected the advice brought with great contempt, and turning to those marauders, “ You rascals, ” says he, you shall dearly repent putting the camp in “ alarm with your false news^a. ” He went so far as to threaten cutting off their ears ; but he was soon undeceived of his fatal prepossession ; and they saw the van of the enemy’s army appear, advancing in good order, and drawing up in battle array in the plain.

To this excess of confidence, succeeded surprise, tumult and confusion, in the Christian camp. The count of Nevers, who did not think that the Turks could, with their javelins and scymitars, resist the lances and swords of the French, made his cavalry mount on horseback. He pretended to have the post of honour in the field of battle, and insisted on making the first charge upon the infidels ; but the king of Hungary represented to him, that that great multitude of Turks, which covered the neighbouring plains, were only militia and peasants, sorely armed, that had been brought out of Asia in chains, and dragged to the war by force ; and that it was the general custom of the infidels to put a great body of these fellows before them, and expose them to the first fury of their enemies only to fatigue them : that afterwards they might, with the fresh and regular troops, which they had in reserve, make their advantages of the disorder and motions that would inevitably happen in the beginning of an engagement ; that the Hungarians, in imitation of their practice^b, usually opposed this sort of enemies with militia of a like nature, of whom they made as little account ; that he earnestly besought him to permit his infantry to stand the first shock of the infidels ; that his cavalry might afterwards, with their lances, open and pierce through the thickest battalions of the Janizaries ; that he would sustain his attack with the grand master at

the

^a Hist. Anon. I. 16. c. 11.

^b Id. ibid. c. 17.

the head of his knights, and the gentry of his own kingdom ; and that after all, he desired him to remember that the honour and glory of a battle did not so much consist in the first onset, as in the last attack, which put an end to the engagement, and decided the victory.

THE count of Nevers assembling his council, to give an answer to this representation, addressed himself first to the sire de Coucy, whose advice the duke of Burgundy his father, had, at parting, recommended to him to follow. That lord, considering the experience which they had in Hungary, of the manner in which the Turks drew up their troops in battle, approved the order and disposition proposed by the king of Hungary, and supported his opinion by saying, that it would be impossible for the militia of that kingdom to give back when sustained by the French cavalry. The admiral John de Vienne, an old captain, was of the same opinion ; but the constable and marshal de Boucicault being piqued that the prince had addressed himself to the sire de Coucy, before he asked their sentiments, declared that it would be scandalous for the French nation to march after the Hungarian foot ; and that they were not come so far to let themselves be preceded by a crowd of sorry peasants and militia, more used to run away than to stand their ground. All the young men, inveigled by this discourse, and hurried away by a mistaken emulation of glory, brought over the count of Nevers by their clamours into the same sentiment. The prince therefore notified to the king of Hungary, that the French could not yield the post of honour in battle to any nation. He ordered his cavalry immediately to mount on horseback, but before they drew their swords against the enemy, these violent and hot-headed young men put them to an use that was unworthy of the name of Christians as well as of Frenchmen. These knights, under pretence that the prisoners which they had taken in several occasions might embarrass them in the action, massacred them all in cold blood, without any regard to the faith and pro-

mise they had given them of ſaving their lives, upon paying the ransom agreed on between them.

THEY afterwards gave the ſignal of battle ; the French going on to charge, found themſelves ſtopped at firſt by a palliſado, and ſeveral rows of piles ſharpened at the end, which embarrassed the cavalry, and hindered them from marching close together, and in good order. There was a neceſſity of diſmounting, to force and remove this obſtacle, which, when they had done, the men of arms mounted again on horseback, and fell upon the Turkish infantry poſted over againſt them ; meeting firſt in their way the great body of militia, which made very little reſiſtance, as the king of Hungary had foretold. Those peasants, who did not merit the name of ſoldiers, ſuffered themſelves to be cut to pieces, or fought thieir ſafety by flight. The Janizaries or Turkish infantry, composed of regular troops, ſhewed more courage and reſolution. They fought with a valour no way inferior to that of the French ; the fight was long and obſtinate ; at laſt the French lances open a way into the thickest battalions of the enemies : the Turks keep their ground no longer : every thing that appears to make head is puſhed back, beaten down, and hemmed round ; terror feizes every quarter, and ſafety is to be found no where : and those formidable janizaries, after loſing above ten thouſand men, were forced to retire behind a great body of cavalry that advanced to their ſuc-cour^a.

THIS was a ſort of a ſecond engagement which the French were forced to come to with the iñfidels. The Turkish cavalry advanced with a large front. The Christians, to prevent being ſurrounded, extended themſelves in a long line, and without keeping their ranks duly, or taking any orders but from their own courage ; every man of arms, as if the victory had depended on his ſingle valour, threw himſelf in among the Turks with ſo reſolute a courage, that nothing

^a Id. ibid. c. 12.

could resist their impetuosity. The Hungarians, who seemed only come to be spectators of the battle, and the infidels themselves could not cease admiring a bravery that seemed superior to the ordinary force of nature. Five thousand Turks fell in this second engagement ; and the French would have ended the day victorious, and covered with glory, had not the fire of those young men hurried them on to the pursuit of the remainder of that cavalry, which had retired to a neighbouring hill.

IN vain did the chief commanders, and particularly the sieur de Coucy, and admiral de Vienne advise them to let the infidels fly, or at least to suffer themselves to take breath, and form their squadrons anew whilst the Hungarians advanced. All the young gentlemen about the count of Nevers, crying out, that it was cowardly to let their enemies escape, pushed on immediately, and without keeping any order, or letting their horses take breath, galloped away to a great distance from the body of the army, and mounted the rising ground where they thought to have found the broken remains of the Turkish army.

BUT what was their surprise, when in their stead, they discovered a new army, composed of forty thousand horse, the flower of Bajazet's troops ? The sultan was posted in the middle of that grove of lances, as in a citadel, in order to take his measures as events might happen. The soldiers start at the sight, and are daunted ; they even suspect their first advantages ; the certainty of vanquishing, which may be called the first earnest of victory, vanishes at once, and fear and terror soon succeed to a rash confidence. These heroes, who like lions, make the Turks tremble before them, says the anonymous author of St. Denis, “ became more dastardly than hares.” the whole body breaks, and every one flies for the safety of his own life. Bajazet's cavalry cuts off their retreat : the greatest part of the French was cut in pieces, and no less than three-thousand of them taken prisoners, among whom were

were the count of Nevers, the count de la Marche, the prince of Bar, Boucicault the constable, and Enguerrand de Coucy. The admiral de Vienne seeing all lost, made a motion to save himself, when immediately calling to mind what he owed to his glory, and turning about to ten or a dozen horsemen that stuck to him^a. "God forbid, my companions, says he to them, that we should sully our reputation for the saving a poor remainder of life; we must try fate by a noble defence, or die here in the bed of honour." His words were scarce spoke, when he charged the infidels, pierced several times into their squadrons, and after first seeing his companions fall, oppressed with the number of their enemies, he himself, covered over with wounds, expired on the very spot where he was fighting.

THE Turks having broke this great body of French, marched with all the confidence that the beginning of a victory inspires, straight against the Hungarians, who were encamped along the banks of the Danube. Their infantry, which was only composed of militia, as we have observed, terrified at the defeat of their allies, did not wait the coming up of the enemy, but broke and fell back upon their own cavalry, filling all with terror and confusion; so that it was a general rout rather than an engagement on this occasion. Such of the gentry of that nation, and the knights of Rhodes that survived, rallied about the king and the grand master: and tho' they saw their ruin was inevitable, by reason of the prodigious number of Turks that surrounded them, no body dishonoured himself so far as to endeavour to save his own life by flight; they all stood their ground, and fought with a bravery worthy of a better fate. The greatest part of these gallant gentry, and a great number of the knights, died on the spot they fought on. The king and the grand master would have shared the same fate, if in the disorder of so general a rout they had not by chance found a fisherman's boat by the river side: this

* Id. ibid. c. 12.

they got into, and in spite of a shower of arrows which those barbarians let fly at them, put off from the shore, and letting themselves drive with the current, got to the mouth of the river, from whence they discovered the Christian fleet that was riding near it. The king and the grand master, overwhelmed with grief, went on board one of the gallies of the order, which carried them safe to Rhodes. The king, notwithstanding the loss of so many knights, was received there, if not with joy, yet at least with all the respect due to his birth and dignity. There are other historians who pretend that he stopped on the coast of Dalmatia *.

THE day after the battle, Bajazet ordered his prisoners to be brought and massacred in his presence, by way of reprisal for the Turkish prisoners which the Christians, before the battle begun, had sacrificed to a shameful precaution. The sultan, whose avarice served for a counterpoise to his cruelty, exempted the count of Nevers and twenty five of the principal nobility out of the general massacre, in hopes of having a great ransom for them; and the money being come from France, when the count de Nevers went to take leave of him, “ I do not require thee, says Bajazet to

“ him with an haughty air, to take the most solemn
1598. “ oath never to fight against me, as I might

“ force thee to do ; on the contrary, if
“ thou hast any sense of honour, I entreat
“ thee to take the field as soon as thou canst, and
“ to assemble all the forces of Christendom : thou
“ canst not do me a more sensible pleasure, than by
“ furnishing me with new occasions of acquiring
“ glory.”

THE sultan, after so glorious a victory over the Latin Christians, turned his arms against the Greeks, his troops over-running the Morea, and destroying all before them with fire and sword. He afterwards called in all his detachments, and joining them in one body, advanced towards Constantinople, and changed the blockade of it into a regular siege. The emperor Manuel,

terrified

* Bonfin. ib. p. 379.

terrified at seeing so formidable an enemy before his walls, begged for succours of all Christian princes; but the different wars which then distracted Europe, did not allow him to expect any immediate relief; and besides, the loss of the battle of Nicopolis, and the tears that were still streaming for the death of so many noble lords as had perished there, had cooled the zeal of the principal nobility and gentry. The Greek emperor therefore saw himself reduced to have recourse to Tamerlaue the great chan of Tartary. He sent ambassadors to him with rich presents, entreating him to use the power of his arms, or at least to interpose his good offices, in order to put a stop to the enterprises of an ambitious prince, who, without any distinction of religion, was for enslaving all the sovereigns that were in the neighbourhood of his dominions.

WHILST this great affair was treating at Tamerlane's court, Thomas Palæologus, despot of the Morea, and brother to the Greek emperor, considering that great potentates never assist little ones *gratis*, laid no stress upon that embassy: he therefore retired to Rhodes, from whence the king of Hungary 1399. was just gone, to return into his own dominions. The Greek prince was received full as honourably as the king of Hungary, in an island which served at that time for a refuge to all Christian princes that were persecuted by the infidels. Palæologus, diffident of his own strength, and perhaps of his courage, sold the Morea to the order of St. John ^a, and agreed with the grand master and council, to deliver up to them Corinth, Sparta, and the principal towns of that great province: he received the price stipulated for them, partly in money, and the rest in jewels.

THE commissaries of the order embarked immediately in order to take possession of the province; they were received with great joy by the magistrates and inhabitants of Corinth, who thought themselves, under the protection of the knights of Rhodes, sufficient-

ly secured for the future from the incursions of the Turks.

BUT the inhabitants of Sparta acted very differently. The bishop of that city, who followed the Greek ritual, and was consequently an enemy to the Latins, not questioning but the order would, as soon as they were masters of the place, put a Latin bishop into his episcopal see, called all the citizens together, and represented to them the misfortune they were going to be exposed to by submitting to the power of the Latins, in so warm and moving terms, that all the inhabitants by concert sent a deputation to the commissioners of Rhodes, to tell them, that they were resolved not to admit them into their city; and that if they offered to come near it, they should be treated as enemies; so that the commissioners not having forces enough to make themselves be obeyed, resolved to return back to Rhodes.

THE despot being naturally inconstant, and finding it hard, after he had reigned as a sovereign, to reconcile himself to the condition of a private man, gave back part of the money, went from Rhodes, and returned to Sparta, where he was received with great joy by his subjects, who assured him that he should find the same obedience from them, and the same fidelity that he had experienced for so many years, provided he would not treat with the Latins, nor admit any of them into the government: so great and so implacable was that aversion which the Greek bishops had inspired into their people, against every body that acknowledged the authority of the pope; and I don't know whether they would not have submitted to the government of the Turks, rather than to that of any Christian prince whatever, in the communion of the church of Rome.

THE order had a great deal of trouble in getting back from the Greek prince the rest of the money, which they had given him. Raimond de l'Estoure, prior of Tholouse, Elias du Fossé, commander of St. Maxence, and Peter of Beaufremont, the grand hofpitaller,

pitaller, made several voyages into the Morea on that account. At last this affair was terminated by brother Louis d'Allemagne, commander of Naples, a knight of an insinuating temper, and a very able negotiator; and by the treaty made with Palæologus, it was stipulated, that the order of St. John should deliver back to him the town of Corinth, and he should give in exchange the county of Soleil, with the barony of Zetonne, besides 46500 ducats, which he was to pay back of the money he had received at Rhodes, and of which he paid 22000 down.

BAJAZET in the mean time carried on the siege of Constantinople with vigour, designing to make it the capital of his empire, and would at last have taken it, had not Tamerlane, the great chieftain of the oriental Tartars, at the solicitation of the Greek ambassadors, and the entreaties of the petty princes of Anatolia, whom Bajazet had plundered of their territories, advanced to put a stop to the progress of a prince who seemed inclined to put no bounds to his ambition and conquests. 'Tis more than probable, that the Mogul or Tartar prince engaged in this war, not so much out of a principle of compassion, rarely to be met with in princes, as out of jealousy against a neighbour who was grown too powerful.

WHATEVER be the motives with which princes usually set off their manifesto's, Tamerlane made use of none but what were noble and generous, and he sent an ambassador to Bajazet, to demand of him the re-establishment of the petty princes that had taken refuge at his court, and that he would at the same time raise his siege from before Constantinople. The ambassador presented him likewise in his master's name with a magnificent vest; but as in the east, presents of that sort are never made but to inferiors, Bajazet, the proudest mortal living, rejected it with disdain. When he mentioned Tamerlane, he treated him as a soldier of fortune, and a captain of a band of robbers, and ordered his ambassador to tell him, from him, that if he was daring enough to enter into his dominions,

he

he knew how to make him repent so rash an enterprise.

THERE are some authors who pretend that Tamerlane was only the son of a shepherd, or an herdsman. Some modern historians, or rather some modern translators of old historians, derive his descent from a royal house among the Moguls of Zagathay. The Tarikh Montekh pretends, that he was descended from Ginghizkhan by the woman's side ; and yet he took upon himself at first only the title of Emir, i. e. commander ; to which, after he had conquered some provinces, he only added that of Kurkhan, or the ally of princes ; which might incline one to think, that he did not at that time look upon himself as a prince. But fortune having raised him to the dignity of great chaim, his extraction grew up in proportion to his power, and he at last became too potent not to be descended of royal blood.

WE are but little better informed of the religion of this prince, than we are of his birth. There are some who say, he was neither a Jew, a Christian, nor a Mahometan. Ahsneben-Arabschach says, that he adhered to the law of Ginghizkhan, and that his religion had a greater affinity to the Christian, than to the Mahometan ; yet it looks as if from a political view he accommodated himself, at least as to the outward exercise, to the worship and religion of the greatest part of his subjects, who were Mahometans ; the rest was indifferent enough to him, and contenting himself, as Ginghizkhan did, to adore a first being, and one God alone, he very freely left him the care of his own glory, and the establishment of his law.

WHATEVER was the case as to the birth and religion of Tamerlane, the Arabian Alhacen, in the history or romance of his conquests, pretends that this prince or chieftain of the Moguls, at the head of a numerous army, first reduced under his empire, falling upon 'em successively one after another, all the Tartar princes that possessed the north of Asia ; that he gained victories over the Muscovite, and afterwards subdued Persia,

sia, Mesopotamia and Syria ; that he made the sultan of Egypt tributary to him ; that some monarchs of the Indies were obliged to take an oath of fidelity to him ; and that China itself, or at least the nothern part of that vast empire, owned him for its sovereign ; so that during the whole course of his life, a victory served only to open a fresh occasion for a new war : and if we may believe Alhacen, the whole world was attentive, and turned its eyes upon his enterprizes, which became, says he, the greatest spectacle of the whole universe. This famous Tartar had a stern look, squinting eyes, a lowring countenance, and a terrible and menacing air, that broke out in all his actions.

SUCH was the greatest of all the successors of Ginghis Khan, and the second hero of the ancient Mogul Tartars. But without adopting all the fables published about him, 'tis certain that he was a great captain, a native of Zagathay, who by his valour raised himself to a prodigious fortune, and by his activity, courage, and admirable discipline, made himself the terror of all his neighbours. He was otherwise cruel and bloody in his temper, and it was his usual saying *, " That a monarch was never safe, if the foot of his throne did not swim in blood ; " a maxim worthy of a Tartar, and which he never deviated from during the whole course of his reign.

THIS barbarous prince, upon receiving Bajazet's answer, took the field at the head of 800,000 men, that followed him, and were commanded, under him, by the princes his sons, and by other princes his tributaries : But the absolute power which he exercised indifferently over both, sunk them to the level of the meanest officers, and all of them were equally submissive to the power and majesty of this dreadful monarch.

No sooner had he declared war against Bajazet, but he attacked Sebaste or Siuvas, a city of Cappadocia. Ortogules, a young prince, full of fire and courage,

had

* Hist. de Tamerlan. par M. Petit de Croix.

had thrown himself into the place, in order to signalize his valour, in hopes of stopping the Tartar's progress, and giving time to the sultan his father, to advance to his relief : but notwithstanding the valour of the prince, and all the bravery shewn by the garrison in its defence, nothing could resist the violence of the attacks of Tamerlane. The place was carried by storm ; the soldiers, and all persons capable of bearing arms, were put to the sword, the women and maidens, the children and the old men, were all carried out of the town into a plain, where they were massacred, without distinction of age or sex. The city was afterwards razed to the ground, and the Tartar, who never reckoned clemency and generosity among the virtues, caused the son of his enemy to be beheaded.

BAJAZET, whose constant prosperity rendered the insults of fortune more insupportable to him, abandoned himself to a violent grief when he heard the fatal news. He loved his son tenderly, and took pleasure in seeing the seeds of ambition and glory, which he had inspired him with, take root and grow up in the heart of the young prince. A death so unworthy of his rank and birth, threw him into inexpressible transports of rage : he swore the destruction of Tamerlane, and hurried away with the violent desire of a speedy vengeance, without allowing himself time to raise a sufficient body of troops to make head against so mighty an enemy, he raised the siege of Constantinople, passed the Bosphorus, and advanced towards Phrygia.

HISTORIANS relate a passage of him, viz. that as his army was on the march, he saw a shepherd upon a neighbouring hill, who secured by his poverty from the rapaciousness of the soldiery, was playing quietly upon his pipe. The sultan stopped for some moments to hear him, and being full of grief, and perhaps envying the condition of the poor man, "Shepherd, says he to him, I beg of thee let the burthen of thy song be, for the future, to repeat these words, Unhappy Bajazet, thou shalt see no more thy dear son Ortogules, nor thy city of Sebaste!" After this, he continued

tinued his march, and met the Tartars near Angouri, or Ancyra, the capital of Galatia. He had scarce above 12000 men in his army, most of them natural Turks, without reckoning an hord of Tartars that inhabited beyond the Euxine and Caspian seas, commanded by Mahmoudkhari, who had enlisted himself under Bajazet. As the sultan had experienced the valour of the Treballians, before he had entirely subdued them, he drew from them a body of foot, though contrary to their inclinations; and fear and terror, the only bonds of slavery, forced them to expose their lives to support the dominion of a prince, whom they looked upon as a tyrant over them.

THE battle was fought at the foot of Mount Stella, and in the very plain where Pompey had formerly beat Mithridates. The shock of the two armies was terrible, and the action very bloody: the Treballians distinguished themselves by an extraordinary valour, victory began to declare itself in their favour, and they pursued the Tartars whom they had obliged to run away. Bajazet fearing that the heat of the action should carry them too far, sent them orders to return to their post. They obeyed: Tamerlane rallied his troops, put himself at their head, and shewed them at the same time the retreat of the Treballians, representing it to them as a downright flight. He gave orders to prince Saruch his son, who commanded a wing of his army, to charge them, which he did, and after a bloody fight, forced them in their turn to fly away. The Asiatick Turks terrified at their defeat, quitted their ranks without striking a blow; and Bajazet found by experience, that in an engagement there was no making the least motion without danger, before so able a general as Tamerlane.

We have observed, that Bajazet had a great body of Tartars in his army. Those barbarians, bribed by their own countrymen, deserted the sultan's party in the very height of the combat; and their commander, to give the finishing stroke to his treachery, pursued the Turks in their rout, killed great numbers of them, took

took Bajazet prisoner, and presented him to Tamerlane.

THERE are very different accounts of the manner in which the Tartar received him. Some historians say, that he reproached him with his pride, his cruelty, and his presumption ; “ Oughtest thou not to know, says he to him, that none but the sons of the unfortunate dare resist our invincible power ?” Other writers pretend, on the contrary, that Tamerlane received him with great civility ; that he conducted him into his own tent, entertained him at his table, and to comfort him under his affliction, discoursed of nothing but the vicissitude and inconstancy of fortune. They add, that he sent him an hunting equipage, either from a principle of compassion, or else perhaps from contempt ; and that the haughty Tartar felt a pleasure in letting him know, that he thought him fitter to follow a pack of hounds, than be at the head of a great army.

THIS at least was the interpretation that Bajazet himself put upon the mysterious present of his enemy. That unfortunate prince, having no command over his resentment, and being eaten up with a sulky melancholy, “ Tell Tamerlane, (replied he with an air of haughtiness,) to the man who came from him with the present,) That he has acted very right, in inviting me to an exercise that hath always been the diversion of princes, and is much fitter for Bajazet, who derives his birth from the great Amurath the son of Orchanes, than for a soldier of fortune, as he is, and a captain of a band of robbers.”

TAMERLANE soon resumed his true character, and provoked at so outrageous an answer, gave orders that very moment for putting Bajazet without a saddle upon an old horse that had been used to carry the baggage, and expose him in that manner through the camp, to the jests and raillery of his soldiers ; which was immediately executed ; and at his return they brought the unhappy Bajazet back before his conqueror, who asked him, with a scornful sneer, and in the most

most cutting terms, if that recreation was not likeways one of the pleasures with which his illustrious ancestors used to divert themselves? To these sharp invectives another outrage succeeded, that pierced him to the very soul.

BAJAZET had married Miliera, or Mary, daughter to Eleazar despot of Servia. The Turks called her Ucogli; she was the most dear to him, and the best beloved of all his wives. Tamerlane, who had taken this princess in the town of Bursa, which he had reduced just before, caused her robe to be cut shorter than the knee, and in this condition, in a manner half naked, forced her to wait upon him at table, and fill out his liquor in her husband's presence. Bajazet, who had no weapon left him but his tongue, distracted with anger and indignation, and perhaps with jealousy, told him aloud, that sprung as he was from the dregs of the people, and from parents too obscure to be known, he ought to be ashamed of trampling upon royal blood, and of being wanting in the regards due to a princess whose birth commanded respect from him.

THE Tartar only laughed at the impotent rage of his prisoner; he carried him about afterwards in his train, loaden with chains; and they even pretend, that he caused him to be shut up in an iron cage like a wild beast. Bajazet could no longer support such a number of outrages; and his misfortune was the greater, because he had always been happy before. Some historians pretend, that life growing insupportable to him, he, to put an end to it, knocked out his brains against the bars of his cage. Other writers relate, that a slave having insolently thrown him a fish-bone, as he would have done to a dog, Bajazet, after having sharpened it with his teeth, made use of it to dispatch himself: others, again, make him die of an apoplexy, as they were conducting him to Samarchand, the capital of Tamerlane's dominions.

As all the designs of that prince had ever tended to an imperious sovereignty, he had no sooner triumphed over the power and life of Bajazet, but he propos-

ed to reduce all the other princes of Anatolia. Most of them, those especially who had implored his protection against Bajazet, were continually making their court to him ; but under the name of allies, they were little different from his other subjects, and their chains were no less heavy for being gilt. There was none but the grand master of Rhodes and his knights, who, though eternal enemies to the Turks, would not yet crouch under the power of the Tartar ; this was the reason which obliged him to declare war against them. But as he had no fleet to transport his army cross the sea, and besides, as the whole island of Rhodes was defended by bastions, redoubts, towers and bulwarks, and seemed to make but one single fortress, and to defy an attack on any side, the Tartar chose rather to begin with Smyrna, a city inhabited by the knights, rich by its commerce, and having the convenience of a port, which in time might supply him with ships to transport his troops into the isle of Rhodes, and the other islands in the Mediterranean and Archipelago, which he was desirous of conquering.

THE city of Smyrna, as we have already observed, is situated in that part of Asia which was peopled by the Greeks, and known antiently by the name of Ionia, though since called, as it is at this day, Anatolia. The town was built like an amphitheatre, on the declivity of an hill that lay to the south-west ; but from the middle up to the very top of this hill, nothing was to be seen but ruins ; the lower part was always well inhabited. In Tamerlane's time there was a castle which guarded and commanded the port. Brother John de Biandra, prior of Lombardy, when he took this fort, had put the arms of the church upon it. And though Clement VI. who was at the head of the christian league, assumed to himself the honour of this conquest, yet Gregory XI. one of his successors, weary of the charge of maintaining a garrison in it, granted the property of it to the knights of St. John, who undertook to defend it.

'Tis easy to imagine, from what has been observed in the course of this history, what a vast expence the maintaining of this place, and the fortifications which they added to it, were to the order, they always keeping there a numerous garrison, commanded by some of the knights. The grand master seeing himself on the point of being attacked, either by Bajazet or Tamerlane, according as fortune should decide of their fate, sent brother William de Mine, the grand hospitaller of the order, to command in Smyrna; and he threw into the place at the same time a supply of ammunition and provisions, a body of fresh troops to reinforce the garrison, and a sum of money for the paying of them.

TAMERLANE, who knew that Smyrna was still better fortified by the number and valour of its defendants, than by its fortifications and height of its walls, in order to prevent the dangers and length of a siege that might prove a very bloody one, made no other demand but what he thought necessary for his glory, insisting only as a point of honour, that the knight, who commanded in the place, should suffer him to plant his standard upon the towers; but the governor rejected this proposition with indignation, there was no remedy left, but the fortune of war must decide that of the place. Tamerlane,^a incensed at the refusal, caused it to be invested; his troops began their attack by filling up the ditches with earth, hurdles and fascines, whilst their archers were plying those that

S 2

defend-

^a Hic etiam Tamerlanus Smyrnam tunc fortissimum castrum in Græcia, vicinum Turcorum dominio, quod erat hospitalis sancti Joannis Hierosolymitani, etiam ea tempestate, vi destruendo solo æquavit. Tamen quidam Cathalanus qui pro eodem hospitali erat capitaneus, si vexillum dicti Tamerlani super Mo collocaisse voluissebat, iugatu cuiusdem episcopi christiani, Tamerlanus illud nullatenus destruxisset: sed quia dictus Cathalanus illud cum fastu seu alijs recusaret facere, dictus Tamerlanus hoc ægrè ferens, et vim viribus accumulans, tandem dictum castrum cepit et destruxit totaliter; adeo quod etiam, ut ipsimet fratres dicti hospitalis aiunt, cum centum millibus florenorum auri in statum pristinum reduci non posset, Theodorici à Niem de Schismate. L.v.2. cap. 30.

defended the walls, with showers of arrows. The knights made frequent sallies to hinder their works from advancing; there was every day some skirmish or other in which those soldiers of Jesus Christ strove with emulation to signalize their valour against the infidels.

THE next thing Tamerlane had recourse to was that of undermining the walls: but the Christians throwing down great pieces of rock, large stones, and beams of timber, crushed the most daring in pieces, and hindered the rest from coming near the foot of the walls. The Tartar provoked at so brave a resistance, and greater designs calling for his presence in other places, he resolved, in order to take the place with a greater expedition, to attempt a scalado. With this view he caused a prodigious number of wooden towers to be built: they were a sort of walking machines, which the besiegers pushed upon wheels, and brought very near the walls. Chalcondilas, speaking of this siege, says, that Tamerlane put two hundred men in every one of these towers, which had ladders within them, and a sort of stair-cales to go up to the different floors. The lowest floor was generally designed for the workmen who conducted the machine, or for the soldiers who worked to undermine the wall; the middle floor was to be on a level with the top of the wall, and contained a bridge which was to be thrown down upon the wall itself, for the besiegers to pass upon it and force their way into the place; and, upon the highest floor they placed their archers, who, having the advantage of the higher post, infested and drove off with their arrows such as offered to defend the place.

CHEREFEDDIN ALI, a native of Yedz, a cotemporary author, translated out of the Persian tongue into the French, by the late M. Petit de la Croix junior, has left us a relation of the siege of Smyrna; and tho' that author does not expressly name the knights of Rhodes, yet it is very easy to distinguish them in the description that he gives of the defenders of the place;

and

and I fancy it will not be disagreeable to the reader to copy that passage of his history. The Persian historian, who died in 1456, expresses himself on this subject, in these, or such like terms.

" TIMUR was informed, that there was upon the sea-coast a place exceeding strong, built of hewn stone, surrounded by the sea on three sides, and on that of the land by a deep ditch, all built with lime, and cemented from the top to the bottom ; that there was a great number of Europeans within it ; that it was called Ismir or Smyrna ; that the Greeks looked upon it as an holy place ; and persons resorted thither from remote countries in pilgrimage with great devotion, who there offered up their vows, and brought their alms ; that there was near it, about the distance of an horse's course, another fortress upon the ridge of a mountain, called also Ismir, but possessed by Musulmen, who were continually at war with those of the other place, on account of their difference in religion ; and as the Smyrna of the Christians was surrounded by the sea on three sides, they were relieved from Europe by sea, and had provisions, cloaths, arms, and all other necessaries brought them that way. And as this place was seated in the farthest part of the frontiers of Asia, and the country of the Musulmen, the Greeks carried on from thence a cruel war, and defended the place, as being of the utmost consequence to them ; that it had never been taken by any Musulman prince, nor ever paid tribute to any body ; that Amurath, the father of Bajazet, had taken the field several times at the head of a mighty army without being able to carry his point, and that Bajazet himself had kept it besieged for seven years together, without making any progress in it ; that this place infested the Musulmen exceedingly, and nothing was to be seen but slaughter and streams of blood flowing continually into the sea like torrents.

" WHEN Timur was informed of the state of Smyrna, his zeal for religion persuaded him that it was his duty to deliver the Musulmen from trouble by entirely destroying their enemies. He detached thither the Mirza Pirmehemet Gmarchoicz, the Emir Check Nouredden, and others, with orders, first to summon them by an ambassador to embrace the Musulman religion, (for such is Mahomet's order;) that if they should be happy enough to do so, his pleasure was that they should be kindly treated, and that they should give him notice of it, in order that he might bestow his favours upon them; that if their obstinacy should soften, and whilst they desired to continue Christians, would submit to pay tribute, they should regulate the sum with them and receive it; but if, unhappily for them, they should dare to stand upon their defence, they should put them all to the sword.

" THE Mirza and the Emirs obeyed immediately, and coming before Smyrna, sent an ambassador to invite the inhabitants to turn Musulmen, using threats as well as promises for that purpose; but as they were predestinated to destruction, both were useless; and Mahmouy, the governor of the place, had sent to demand succour of all the princes of Europe, so that he had got together a great number of the bravest christian captains, or rather a company of mad devils, who erected magazines there, and supplied it with ammunition and provisions.

" OUR generals gave advice thereof to the court, and Timur, upon the news, resolved to go thither in person. He left his baggage at the foot of the mountain of Tire; and though it was winter, and the weather exceeding rainy, he would needs mount on horseback, that the merit of this religious war might be ascribed to him, and march on that side. He arrived there on Saturday the 6th of Jumazyulevel an. 805. at the head of his army, and sent orders to the Mirza Mehemet Sultan, who was in winter quarters at Magniscah, to advance and post himself

“ self before Smyrna. The like orders were sent to
“ Merasimiren-Chuh and Bonléen, as also to the Emir
“ Gehan-chah and others. At Timur’s arrival before
“ the place, they beat all their drums and kettle
“ drums, and the whole army set up a great shout.
“ The place was immediately attacked on the land
“ side, and every general carried on the sap over a-
“ gainst his post, and prepared engines and battering
“ rams for the assault. They shot arrows and threw
“ pots of wildfire upon the gates of the castle ; the
“ Emir Chamelec caused likeways great scaffolds with
“ three feet to be erected in the middle of the water
“ near one another, over which they threw great
“ planks, and from the two sides of the castle to the
“ place where the feet of the scaffolding touched up-
“ on the land, they made a plain even way, and so
“ firm, that the soldiers might boldly stand and walk
“ on them, without fearing their breaking down, and
“ fight there as well as if they had been upon land.
“ This being finished, the Musulmen took their buck-
“ lers, and got up on the scaffolds, assaulting the
“ castle from thence ; and the way being thus shut
“ up on the side of the sea, it was impossible for any
“ body whatever to succour the besieged.

“ IN the mean time the Mirzas, Mehemed sultan,
“ and Miranchah arrived, having left their baggage
“ at Magni-siah, under the care of the Emir Chamé-
“ din-Abbas : this reinforcement was of great service
“ in forwarding the siege, for Timur gave orders for
“ the general assault. The Emir of Loumans and co-
“ lonels of Hézarés, with their troops advanced to it.
“ each on the side where he was posted, and the as-
“ fault lasted from morning till evening, and from
“ the evening till morning, the brave men on both
“ sides performing actions of wonderful vigour. If
“ the attack was obstinate and resolute, the defence
“ was equal to it, and no body had time to rest a
“ moment ; the engines and battering rams beat down
“ the walls and towers, and the besieged still undaunt-
“ ed, were continually throwing pots of naphta,
“ wildfire,

“ wildfire, and showers of stones and arrows from
“ engines as well as bows, without the least inter-
“ mission.

“ ALL this while the rain was so excessive, that it
“ looked as if the universe was going to be over-
“ whelmed with a second deluge; yet notwithstanding
“ ing this prodigious storm, the indefatigable Timur
“ was every moment giving orders to his generals, and
“ encouraging his soldiers in person. After the min-
“ ers had finished their works, and propped up the
“ bastions and courtines with stones, they filled the
“ mines with fascines and faggots dipped in naphta
“ and set fire to them, upon which the walls were
“ thrown down at once, and several of the besieged
“ fell from the top of them, and were killed. The
“ Musulmen forced them sword in hand to quit the
“ breaches that they defended, and made their way in-
“ to Smyrna, crying out victory, and praising God,
“ to whom they offered the heads of all their enemies
“ by way of thanksgiving for their success. Very few
“ of those escaped who had thrown themselves into
“ the sea, and were swimming to the ships that lay off,
“ great numbers of them being drowned in the at-
“ tempt. After they had put the people of Smyrna to
“ the sword, they demolished the buildings both of
“ the town and castle, and threw the materials, the
“ bricks, arms and goods, into the sea.

“ SOME great ships called caracas came from cer-
“ tain parts of Europe; these had two masts at least,
“ and were well provided with soldiers and arms on
“ board to succour those of Smyrna. When they drew
“ near the port, and saw no marks either of the town
“ or castle, they were startled and stopped their course.
“ Timur gave orders to throw the heads of some of the
“ Christians on board these ships, and the throwers
“ of wildfire having executed his orders, several heads
“ fell into the very ships. The seamen knowing
“ the heads of their comrades, tacked about and re-
“ turned in a fright, altogether disappointed of their
“ expectation.”

THIS

THIS is Cherefeddin's relation of what passed at the siege of Smyrna. 'Tis plain from thence, that what he says of the pilgrimages made by the Christians to that city, whither, he says, they brought alms, is to be understood of Jerusalem, which name the knights were called by. The succour which those of Smyrna sent to get in Europe, from whence they received a number of brave captains, or rather a company of mad devils, all this description represents the gallant defence made by the knights. The author has not forgot the great carrack of the order, and when he treats the knights as sea-faring men, it is plain that he means those of Rhodes. Yet after all, they were unable as we have seen, to resist the efforts of Tamerlane.

THAT barbarian, as his custom was, slaughtered all the inhabitants, and demolished the place. He acted in this cruel manner, purposely to intimidate such as should refuse to open their gates to him. Whenever he laid siege to any town, they always planted the first day a white standard upon his tent, to shew that he was disposed to use clemency to those that should surrender immediately. The day following, that signal was of a red colour, to signify that he would have blood, and that the lives of the governor and those principal officers of the garrison must pay for their not surrendering on the first summons. But the third day they planted a black standard, to declare, that whether the place was carried by storm, or made a voluntary surrender, every body was put to death, and the town entirely destroyed. Notwithstanding all the precautions that his cruelty made him take, several knights, and a considerable number of the soldiers made their escape, upon the town's being taken, by throwing themselves into the sea, and swimming to the ships that were come to throw succours into the place.

TAMERLANE whom we may consider as another Attila, and as a scourge of God, after filling Asia Minor with blood, had a design to pass over into Europe,

rope, and extend his conquests as far as the pillars of Hercules ; to cross afterwards the streights of Gibraltar, and after reducing Africa, to return by the way of Egypt into his own dominions. But as he was making preparations proportionable to so vast a project, he received advice that a king of India, whose name historians do not mention, had fallen into Persia, ravaged a great part of the country, and taken Cheri, one of the principal cities of that kingdom, where Tamerlane's treasure was kept, which now became the prey of this other barbarian.

THE proud Tartar, who fancied himself superior to all the monarchs of the world, and perhaps even to fortune, and the condition of human nature itself, fell into a rage at the news. He marched immediately against that prince, resolving to cut him to pieces ; but after several engagements and trials of his forces, finding he had to do with a prince as powerful and as great a captain as himself, and feeling himself likewise advanced in years, he thought proper to make peace with his enemy, which he did, and retire into his own territories to Samarchand, where he died a little while after^a, which was occasioned by his having given too great a loose to wine and women. Other historians pretend that he died upon the road to China. His sons divided his empire between them, but soon fell into dissentions, which gave Bajazet's children an opportunity of recovering their father's dominions. These were four in number, viz. Joshua, Musulman or Calapin, Moses and Mahomet. These four princes reigned successively one after another : the three first came to a violent end ; Mahomet survived the rest, and several historians of that nation, without taking notice of his brothers, rank him as the immediate successor to Bajazet.

WHILST these civil wars lasted, and these infidel princes disputed the empire in their several turns, the grand master made his advantage of their divisions ; and to provide for the better security of the isles belonging

^a April 1. 1415.

longing to the order, particularly of that of Langos, he formed a project for taking an old castle situated on the main land twelve miles from that island in the gulph of Ceramis, and upon the ruins, as they say, of Halicarnassus, the capital city of Caria, a town famous for the magnificent tomb that queen Artemisia antiently erected for king Mausolus her husband. This place was not less illustrious in antiquity for the birth of the Greek historian Herodotus, and Dionysius surnamed Halicarnassæus. The grand master went himself on board his fleet, coasted along Caria, landed in the gulph, entered in the port with a south-west wind, landed his troops, surprised and attacked a garrison of Tartars, which Tamerlane had left in the place, and made himself master of it ; but finding it weak, he resolved to raise another, which he built upon a rock, on the point of a peninsula that jutted out into the sea : He named it the castle of St. Peter, and the Turks called it afterwards Bidrou, strengthening it with all the fortifications that art could invent ; the walls were very high, and there were port-holes or openings in them at certain distances, supplied with cannon, which kept the enemies ships at a distance. The place was still better fortified on the land side, and besides the height and thicknes of the walls, the entrance of it was defended by bulwarks and bastions, and 'tis pretended that seven gates must be passed thro', before there was any getting into the body of the place. There was an inscription over the last of them, in these words of the psalmist, " *Nisi Dominus ædificaverit ci-vitatem, frustra vigilat qui custodit eam,*" to signify, that the strongest garrisons cannot preserve a place which is not built in the name and for the glory of the Lord. When the fortress was in a condition of defence, the grand master made them hollow and enlarge the ditches about it, so as to let the sea water into them, and he always kept a certain number of brigantines, barks and feluccas, which upon the least signal, in concert with the gallies of Lango and Rhodes, block'd up the river of Caria, and hindered the vessels of
the

the Corsairs from entering it ; and the castle on the land side served as a place of refuge to such christian slaves of the neighbouring countries as could find means to escape out of the prisons and chains of the infidels.

THE grand master's care was not confined to the bare preservation of the isles of the order ; he equally concerned himself in the defence of all the christian states in the East : he was a sort of general in ordinary to them. The isle of Cyprus particularly, which is situated near Rhodes, owed its preservation entirely to the fleets and forces of the knights. But if their valour kept the infidels at a distance from it, all the prudence and skill of the grand master could not guard against and prevent the ill effects of the little courage and dastardly spirit of the Cypriots, a nation effeminated by luxury and voluptuousness, which tho' they professed the christian religion, still sacrificed in reality to the goddes's of pleasure, the antient tutelar divinity of the island in the times of paganism.

PETER of Lusignan was reigning in the island at that time. Some important affairs calling him to Italy, he, before his setting out, left the government of his kingdom to the count of Rohas or Rohais ; so they then called the county of Edessa, of which however he was only the titular lord, since the conquest made of it by the infidels. The regent, in the king's absence, debauched the queen, as they pretend, and in concert with her, took measures to deprive him of his crown : 'twas almost impossible for them to have carried their iniquity higher. The king having advice of their ill designs, by an express secretly dispatched to him by a lord whose name was Visconti, returned home immediately, caused the traitor to be seized, and delivered him into the hands of justice to be punished according to the rigour of the law. But as the laws in that effeminate nation had scarce any vigour at all, the judges being corrupted by the queen's credit and her adulterer's presents, pronounced him innocent, and Visconti was condemned as a slanderer to perpetual banishment.

banishment. The king, enraged at a sentence that dishonoured him, changed from a wise and moderate prince, to be a furious and cruel tyrant ; and in order to revenge himself, fell upon all his subjects without distinction. He loaded them with irons, confiscated their goods, ravished the honour of their wives and daughters, and even abandoned them to the ministers of his tyranny upon the slightest pretences ; and the least suspicion of rebellion was the same thing as if the criminal had been found guilty, who was immediately hurried away to punishment.

THE common prisons not being sufficient to hold the great number of unhappy wretches whom he caused to be seized every day, he ordered a new one to be built in the middle of the public square ; and from the most refined vengeance, forced even persons of quality of both sexes to work at it, and assist the matrons. In this number of persons born for slavery, there happened to be a woman of spirit, who tried to engage them to throw off so detestable a yoke. To gain her point, she, who was a gentlewoman born, and of one of the best families in the island, under pretence of walking with greater ease under the burdens she was forced to carry, tucked up her petticoats and shift above her knees, and continued so till the king, who came regularly every day to see his workmen, appeared with all his court about him : as soon as she saw him, she let down her petticoats, but when he was gone by, she tucked them up again. Some persons, scandalized at this breach of modesty, demanding of her why she veiled her nakedness before the king only, " Because, says she, women are not so scrupulous before one another on that head^a ; and as to you there is not any one among you that seems to have any thing of the man in him but the king." This reproach raised a violent indignation in the Cypriots : they were ashamed of their own weakness and cowardice, and fell immedately upon the king and slew him.

VOL. II.

T

They

^a Hist. de l'île de Chypre par Ant. Maria Gratiani.

They gave the crown to Petrin or Peter II. his son, a young child, who was still under the direction of a governor, and put the regency of the kingdom into the hands of James de Lusignan, a prince of the blood, and the child's uncle.

THIS prince, at his accession to the government of the kingdom, or as others say, at the young king's coronation, made a noble feast : a great number of Venetian and Genoese noblemen were at this royal entertainment. These strangers disputed for precedence, but by the regent's credit it was decided that day in favour of the Venetians. The Genoese, in order to revenge themselves, resolved to carry it by force, and agreed together to come the next day to the palace with arms concealed under their cloaks. The regent having notice of their plot, ordered eight noble Genoese, who were walking in the hall of the palace, to be thrown out of the windows : and to make the a se still more odious, they pretend, that these noblemen were entirely ignorant of the design of their countrymen.

THIS news being carried to Genoa, the senate, to revenge the barbarous outrage, sent a strong fleet to Cyprus, with fourteen thousand land forces on board, under the command of Peter Fregose. The Genoese ravaged the island, besieged and took Famagusta, and seized upon the regent, who was carried ignominiously with the prince's his wife to Genoa, and shut up in prison. He continued there till the young king his nephew's death, who leaving no issue, he became his heir. The Genoese in this juncture set him at liberty, but sold it him very dear ; and before they suffered him to embark, in order to return to his dominions, they obliged him to make them a cession of the city of Famagusta, to be enjoyed by them in absolute sovereignty, and to submit to pay them an annual tribute of ten thousand ducats.

JAMES, to gain his liberty and crown, signed the treaty, resolving to give it one day such an explanation as should be suitable to his interest. The situation

of

of his affairs did not allow him, during his life, to get rid of this vassalage. Janus his son, so called because he was born at Genoa, being brought up from his cradle in an hereditary hatred against the Genoese, attempted to surprise the city of Famagusta ; which occasioned a war between that prince and the Genoese. Those republicans had for a long time been torn to pieces by the terrible dissensions that broke out between the body of the nobility and the people, and had a little before given up themselves to Charles VI. king of France, who had put John le Meingre, called marshal de Boucicault, to command in Genoa, as governor or viceroy. That lord, to oppose the designs of the king of Cyprus, ordered a fleet to be fitted out immediately, resolving to command it in person ; and till this armament might be in a condition to set sail, he dispatched away Anthony Grimaldi, knight of the order of St. John of Jerusalem, with three gallies and some land forces, which entered the port of Famagusta, without the least opposition.

BOUCICAULT, having equipped seven great vessels and nine gallies, set sail for the Levant ; he landed first in the isle of Rhodes, and was received by the grand master and the knights with all the honours due to his personal merit, and to the dignity of the prince he represented. The grand master lodged him in his own palace, and entertained him several times in a castle or banqueting-house seated on a rising ground near the city. In the discourses that passed between these two great men in private, the grand master represented to the marshal, that whatever pleasure he had to see him in the isle of Rhodes, he could not help being sensibly concerned at the occasion that brought him thither with an army ; that the island of Cyprus lying in the neighbourhood of Palestine and Egypt, had always hitherto been a convenient place for all the European fleets to put in at ; that it was the strongest bulwark the Christians had then left in the East ; that he was going with his army to bring upon it all the calamities that are inseparable from war ; that he was

even going to assist the Saracens, and facilitate their conquest of the island ; and then conjured him to suffer him to go over into Cyprus, being in hopes that God would bless his voyage and intentions ; and he might perhaps be happy enough to restore peace and amity between the two nations.

BOUCICAULT replied, that conquest was not so much his business as the preserving the rights of a republic that had put it self under the protection of the king his master ; that the king of Cyprus might have peace if he pleased, and would give over his enterprise on Famagusta , and that as for himself, he had much rather turn his arms against the infidels, than employ them against a christian king, especially against a prince whose illustrious house derived its original from France.

THE grand master having got so favourable an answer, ordered the admiral galley to be fitted out, and taking two others with him for a convoy, set sail for Cyprus. The marshal not caring to remain idle during the grand master's voyage, went on board his fleet, thinking to ravage the country about Alexandretta, a city of Syria then called Lescandelours or Scanderoon, situated twenty five leagues from Aleppo on the gulph of Lajazzo, in the midst of some marshes, and but a little distance from the sea ; a Turkish prince was lord of it at that time. Boucicault landed his troops, which consisted of 800 knights and esquires, among which were the banners of the marshal, of the seignior d'Acher, of the seignior of Chateau Morant, of messire William de Naillac, of the same name with the grand master ; and those likewise of the seigniors Chateauneuf and Puyos ; he had about 2000 men on board that little fleet in all. The lord of the country was then five great days journey from Alexandretta, and was encamped on his frontiers to oppose his brother who disputed the seigniory with him. The marshal taking advantage of his absence, ordered the seignior of Chateau-Morant to attack the lower town, whilst brother Lewis de Culan, who executed the office of camp-marshal

shal in this little army, guarded a narrow pass that hindered any succours from being thrown into the place. The attack and defence were smart on both sides ; the Christians were twice repulsed, but returning the third time to the assault, carried what was called the lower town, that was inhabited chiefly by merchants. Every thing there was plundered, and their rich magazines amply rewarded the valour of the soldiers, whilst at the same time the marshal's fleet made themselves masters of the port. The lord of Scanderoon having advice, that whilst he was defending the entry of his country against his brother, the Christians were on the point of taking his capital, hastened to the succour of the place, which was much straitned. He made several attempts to throw in succour, but finding all the passes secured by the marshal's troops, he had recourse to treaty, a method always most suitable to the weaker side, and sent ambassadors to the marshal to complain, that without having ever had any dispute with the Genoese, and without any previous declaration of war, he had fallen upon his dominions, and there committed acts of hostility, which are never practised but between open and declared enemies.

His ambassadors added, that how just soever the complaints of their master were, yet if the marshal would withdraw his troops out of his territories, he was ready to enter into a strict confederacy with him ; and in case he came to a rupture with the king of Cyprus, he would oblige himself to furnish him all the necessary supplies for sustaining that war in an island so remote from Genoa.

THE marshal listened to these proposals the more willingly, in that if he was obliged to make war in Cyprus, he might draw provisions and other succours from that country which lay near the island ; and besides he was afraid of making any stay on that coast, in a season when the air of Alexandretta was so very unwholsom and dangerous, by reason of the exhalations arising from the marshes, when those who did not die outright, would be sure not to come off without a

grievous fit of sickness. Having therefore made his treaty with the lord of the country, and spent only 14 days in the expedition, he re-embarked his troops, and stood off for the coast of the isle of Cyprus, to hasten the grand master's negotiation, but he found the affair very much forwarded.

THAT prince having a conference with the king, made him sensible of the power of the Genoese, and represented to him that he was not in a condition to make head against the forces of that republic ; especially when commanded by a general of the marshal's experience ; that if he should call the Venetians to his succour, he would make his country the theatre of a bloody war ; that he himself would be the victim of it ; and that whoever would be victorious in war, he would have nothing left him but the choice of his tyrants ; that he therefore advised him to adhere religiously to the treaty which the Genoese had made with the king his father, and not to trouble them in the possession of Famagusta, by which means he would interest them in the defence of the whole island, against the enterprises of the sultans of Egypt, who had several times attempted already to make themselves masters of it.

THIS representation was not only founded upon good sense and the wisest politics, but being given from the grand master, was something more than bare advice. The kings of Cyprus had for many years been supported merely by the protection and succours which they drew from Rhodes ; and the prince then reigning could not reject the grand master's good offices and mediation, without incurring the indignation of the whole order. The grand master indeed was at that time considered as the most powerful christian prince in all the east ; and the order never had braver officers, nor a greater number of them. The convent was generally peopled with a thousand knights ; most of the isles called Sporades depended on it, and the sea was covered with their fleets. The Rhodian merchants under the protection and convoy of the vessels of the order,

order, grew rich at the same time by their commerce : there was not a corsair that durst venture near the seas of Lycia, and we may affirm, that the arms of the order was as terrible to the infidels, as its valour was generally esteemed by the princes of Christendom ; so that it is surprizing the king of Cyprus should pay so submissive a deference to the grand master's sentiments. It was agreed between them, that the siege of Famagusta should be raised, and the king, by the grand master's mediation, had a conference with the marshal : but a difficulty started up, which had like to have ruined the negotiation before the treaty was signed.

The Genoese engaged Boucicault to insist that the king of Cyprus should re-imburse them the expence of the war, which they made amount to very considerable sums. The king pretended on the contrary, that they ought to be satisfied that he had, out of regard to the grand master, been pleased to be content to raise the siege of a place which had belonged to his ancestors for so many ages, and which he was on the point of reducing. Both sides maintained their pretensions with equal ardour, and there was reason to apprehend that this article might break off the whole treaty ; but the grand master, who knew the importance and necessity of a peace, prevailed with the king of Cyprus to pay the Genoese 70,000 ducats ; and as the young prince was not master of such a sum, he got it lent him out of the treasury of the order, which for security had the regal crown, with vessels of gold and silver, and precious stones, as a pawn, till the money advanced should be all paid. After the conclusion of this treaty, the grand master and the marshal re-imbarked, but before they returned to Rhodes, they resolved to ravage the coasts of Syria and Palestine, which were then in the possession both of the Saracens, and the troops of Tamerlane. They landed on the coast of Tripoli thinking to surprise the garrison and inhabitants of the place ; but they found the shore defended by above 1500 men, in which number were 600 cavalry, part of Tamerlane's troops,

all dressed, says the historian of Boucicault, in fine velvet and cloth of gold.

THOUGH the Christians saw plainly that the infidels had notice of their design, and were prepared to receive them, yet they resolved to make a descent upon the coasts of the Saracens. The marshal put himself at their head with the grand master, who was attended by brother Raimond de Lesture, grand prior of Toulouse, brother Peter de Beaufremont, hospitaller, and a great number of other knights of the order. These knights, hurried on by their courage, and without waiting till the boats could put them on shore, threw themselves up to the neck in the sea, and advanced boldly sword in hand against the infidels ; and though the christian troops made at most but 3000 men and the Saracens army was computed at 15,000, our knights, sustained by the troops of Genoa, charged them so furiously, that the barbarians, not able to stand the attack, gave ground and fled, but rallied afterwards at some distance from the shore, when their commanders drew them up in order of battle. There was no great likelihood that the Christians should with so small force advance, and attack that great body of Saracens, which was likewise covered with hedges, and desiles, and had the strong city of Tripoli behind them. But the grand master and the marshal could not bring themselves, notwithstanding the inequality of number, to re-embark without advancing nearer them ; so that letting their soldiers take breath a while, they divided their little army into three bodies ; and taking care not to get at too great a distance from the shore, for fear of being intercepted by the Saracens, they march towards them, and attack them sword in hand. They charge on both sides, and close together in a moment ; the combat grows bloody, and lasts for some time with fury ; but the greatest loss falling upon the infidels, they can no longer bear up against the efforts of the Christians ; they retire into gardens planted with fruit-trees, and fenced about with thick hedges, but not thinking themselves safe enough there, most of them

them run to the very city for refuge ; in a word, the whole body is broke, and the christian generals meet with no enemy to resist them. However not having a sufficient body of troops to form the siege of Tripoli, a place of great strength, and defended by a garrison numerous enough to take the field, the Christians re-embarked ; but before they returned, the grand master and the marshal, resolved to make an attempt on Baruth, and try if they should find the enemy on their guard, and prepared to receive them.

BARUTH, or Berytus, a town of Phœnicia, was at that time considerable on account of its commerce. Its harbour served for a sort of staple to all the merchandize carried from Egypt into Europe; and most of the Christian merchants, and particularly the Venetians, had their counting-houses and considerable magazines there. The Christian fleet sailing on in its course saw a light bark, called at that time Gripperio, coming out of the port of Baruth, and making all the sail it could to get out to sea, and escape from the Christians ; but a galley being ordered to pursue it, soon came up with it, and brought it back to the generals. The captain of this little vessel being examined according to the laws of war, about his condition and circumstances, and the reasons of his eagerness to avoid the Christian fleet, he owned himself a Christian and a Venetian, but did not care to say more. However, being threatened to be put to the rack, the fear of torture made him confess, that he had been dispatched by the Venetian general to all the sea-ports of Phœnicia, Palestine and Egypt, to give the subjects of the sultan of Egypt advice of the Christians being at sea, under the command of the grand master of Rhodes and the governor of Genoa, in order that they might take the necessary precautions against the enterprises of their enemies. Most of the soldiers and officers of the fleet, enraged at the intelligence given them by this Venetian, were for throwing him into the sea, but were hindered by their generals, who continued firm in their resolution

of keeping on their course and making a descent near Baruth.

As the town was but poorly fortified, the inhabitants, upon the advice brought them by the Venetian, had carried off the best of their effects to the woods and mountains. This did not prevent the Christians from landing ; and after plundering the town, they set it on fire, re-imbarked and sailed towards Sayda, anciently called Sidon, another town of Phœnicia, 35 miles from Baruth. They found the same precautions there, viz. the port and shore lined with inhabitants all in arms, to the number of 10,000 men. The grand master and the marshal, however, by help of the engines which they had on board, made their descent at the head of 200 men of arms and as many cross-bow men, and were going to land the rest of the troops, when they were surprised by so violent stormy weather, and a contrary wind, that they could not continue their landing. The grand master and marshal saw themselves by this means left with only 5 or 600 men about them, destitute of succours, and exposed to enemies vastly superior in strength, who might have cut them in pieces if they had known how to make their advantage of so favourable an opportunity.

THE barbarians indeed advanced to charge them, but the Christians closing and keeping their ranks, made head against them on all sides with so resolute a countenance, that they thought fit only to fight at a distance and incommode them with their arrows. The Christians did the same, and the sea, after a storm of five hours, growing calm, they re-imbarked in sight of the infidels, who never durst advance nearer than within bow shot of them.

THE fleet landed afterwards on the coast of Lidda, another town of Palestine, which the Greeks called anciently Dio-polis, i. e. the city of Jupiter. This place was situated in a plain, about a league north of Ramatha ; it was covered on one side by a mountain, and on the other by a wood. They landed there, not

on the side of the main sea, but in a little creek or bay, which was defended by two towers. They discovered only 3000 men, or thereabouts, who appeared and kept themselves at a distance from the sea, seeming to be afraid of them. The generals, in order to reconnoitre them, put some troops on shore, without any opposition being made to their landing, and upon the report of the principal officers, resolved to attack the enemy next day. But for fear lest the barbarians assisted by the night, should surprise the troops that were landed, they made them retire on board the fleet in the evening. The infidels seeing the Christians re-imbarking, and believing that their scouts had discovered the ambuscade, which they had laid between the town and the sea, sallied out from behind the mountain and the wood, to the number of above 30,000 men, all of them sword in hand, and setting up a great shout, advanced boldly to the foot of the towers, and very brink of the sea. 'Twas this precipitate eagerness of theirs to shew themselves, which saved the Christians, who would else have been all cut off the next day, if they had, pursuant to their generals design, marched to Lidda, and advanced into the plain, where they must have been intercepted and surrounded by an army that was so very numerous, and so vastly superior to their own.

THE grand master and the marshal seeing the season advanced, and that there was nothing to be done along the coast, took leave of one another, the grand master returning to Rhodes, and the marshal sailing for Famagusta, where, upon his arrival, he gave the necessary orders for the security of the place. He stayed but a few days there, and then set out on his return for Italy; but before he made for Genoa, he touched at the isle of Rhodes, to thank the grand master and the order, for their good offices towards him in the late treaty concluded with the king of Cyprus. The grand master treated him nobly, stored his fleet with provisions and refreshments, and shewed him, before he embarked, the principal fortresses of the island,

island, their garrisons, arms, and the magazines in each of them. The marshal admired particularly the port of Rhodes, which was fortified with two castles, well provided with warlike engines that commanded the mouth of it, and filled with an infinite number of ships of war, merchant vessels, gallies and galliots, faicks and felucca's, most of them equipped for war, and making frequent returns with various prizes that they were continually taking from the infidels, and chiefly from the subjects of the sultans of Egypt. Those barbarians could scarce venture any more out of the port of Alexandria, or sail in the seas of Cyprus and Lycia, without being snapped up by the knights of Rhodes.

THE sultan, though full of resentment at these captures, and the several de-crets which the grand master had just made upon his coasts, thought it yet more proper to make peace with the order, than to continue a war so prejudicial to his subjects : with this view he sent an ambassador to Rhodes. As the knights were on the point of entering into a league of Christian princes against the Turk, and it was not proper to have two such mighty enemies to oppose at once, they resolved to hear the sultan's minister. Commissioners were named to enter upon a negotiation, and peace was soon enough agreed upon, by reason of the disposition there was in both parties to conclude it ; but it was easy enough to see that the grand master prescribed the terms of the treaty.

NAILLAC, who had always in view the spirit and main design for which his order was instituted, took care to have it stipulated, that in order to prevent the profanations of infidels, he should have leave to wall in the holy sepulchre ; that he might always keep six knights in Jerusalem who should be exempted from all Carache, i. e. from all tribute ; who might entertain other knights in their house, and such pilgrims as should come out of devotion to the holy city ; that the order might ransom Christian slaves either by paying the same money that they cost their masters, or by giving

giving a Saracen in exchange for a Christian ; that there should be a free commerce between the subjects of the order and those of the sultan, and that the grand master might keep consuls at Jerusalem, Rama and Alexandria, to secure the Christians from the exactions they were exposed to in the territories of the infidels : and in fine, that the ships of the order might export corn out of the sultan's dominions. - It was agreed likewise, that in case either party was for breaking the treaty, and beginning the war a-fresh, he should be obliged to make a publick denunciation of it three months before, that both sides might secure their effects before acts of hostility were begun : all which conditions are a demonstration of the sultan's eagerness to make peace, and his fear of the power and forces of the knights.

BUT how numerous would the forces of this formidable body have been, had they not been divided by the unhappy schism which then infested the order as well as the universal church ? We have already observed, that there were two popes at the same time in the church, each of them having different nations under their authority, and two superiors in the order independent on each other. The convent of Rhodes, the knights in the east, with those of France, Castile, Scotland, and part of Germany, acknowledged the authority of the grand master, who adhered to Benedict XIII. successor to Clement VII. whilst the popes that succeeded Urban VI. had, in order to retain the Arragonian, Italian, and English knights, as well as those of the kingdoms of the north, Bohemia and Hungary, in their obedience, appointed Italian commanders to be their superiors, under the title of lieutenants of the grand mastership ; and who, as if that great dignity was not already filled up, governed this part of the order without having the least intercourse with the grand master of Rhodes. 'Tis easy to guess what prejudice such a fatal division must cause in that island, which saw its forces divided, and that for a long time received no contribution from the priories and com-

mandries that had separated themselves from the body of the order.

HAPPILY at this juncture the cardinals who adhered to both the popes, excited by the zeal of most of the princes of Christendom, agreed together to join their endeavours to assemble a general council ; and it being then uncertain which of the two rivals was the true pope, whether Peter de Luna, stil'd Benedict XIII. or Angelo Corrario, who had taken the name of Gregory XI. these cardinals resolved to put a person into the chair of St. Peter, whose election should be so indisputable, that no Christian could help acknowledging him for sole and lawful head of the universal church.

TWAS with this view that these cardinals had in all the conclaves held from the time of the death of Urban VI. and Clement VII. subcribed to a formal instrument, whereby the person who should be elected out of their body, engaged himself for the sake of peace to renounce the papedom, which they called accepting of the vote of cession. But experience demonstrated afterwards, that all those whom they raised to that supreme dignity, thought themselves, the moment they received the papal crown, dispensed from the promises they had made in order to attain it : and the competitors, by a tacit collusion, agreed in nothing but in one point, which was never to agree upon any of the several expedients proposed in order to bring about a reciprocal cession.

THE fear of seeing this schism perpetuated in the church, determined the cardinals to call a general council in the city of Pisa in Italy. Scarce had a more illustrious and withal a more numerous assembly been seen in any part of the Christian world. There were present at it 22 cardinals, 4 patriarchs, 12 archbishops in person, and 14 by their proxies, 80 bishops, and the proxies of above 100 ; the grand master of Rhodes, accompanied with 16 commanders, the prior of the knights of the holy sepulchre, and procurator of the Teutonic order ; 87 abbots, in which number were

were the abbots, superiors of the order of the Cisterians, of Grammont, of Camaldoli and Vallombroia, with the proxies of the abbots general of the order of the Premonstrants, and of St. Anthony of Vienna; the proxies of 200 other abbots; an infinite number of priors and ecclesiastics; the deputies of the universities of Paris, Thoulouse, Orleans, Angers, Montpellier, Bologna, Florence, Cracow, Vienna, Prague, Cologne, Oxford and Cambridge; above 300 doctors in divinity and canon law; and the ambassadors of the kings of France, England, Portugal, Bohemia, Sicily, Poland and Cyprus, of the dukes of Burgundy, Brabant, Lorraine, Bavaria and Pomerania, of the marquis of Brandenburg, the landgrave of Thuringia, and of almost all the princes of Germany.

THIS famous council was opened on Lady-day; they sat several times, and after several citations had been made in vain to the 1429. two pretenders, who would never answer March 25. them, and all other formalities requisite to be observed in *causa majori*, and in an affair of such importance, the holy council proceeded at last to a definitive sentence, declaring Peter de Luna and Angelo Corrario schismatics, and guilty of perjury and artifice, in order to impose on the faithful, and keep up the schism which had distracted the church for so many years together, depriving them of the popedom, and allowing the cardinals to proceed to the election of a sovereign pontiff: during which, the guard of the conclave was committed to the grand master and his knights.

ALL the cardinals present in the council gave their votes unanimously for the cardinal of Milan, who at his inauguration, and at the ceremony of his coronation, took the name of Alexander V. a person illustrious for his eminent piety and profound knowledge; qualities equally to be wished in all those persons who fill that august dignity. This pope was a Greek by birth, and of the isle of Candia, but born of parents so miserably poor, that he was abandoned by them in his

infancy, insomuch that he never knew of any he had : this made him say, after his advancement to the pontifical chair, that the church would, during his pontificate, be secure from nepotism. This holy pope indeed made a more worthy use of his riches, employing them equally in relieving the poor, and in rewarding men of virtue and merit. Whatever joy the church in general expressed at the election of so pious a pope, and in expectation of its putting a final end to the schism, no body could be more affected with it than the grand master, who considered it as a means to reunite all Christian princes, and engage them in a league against the Turks. With this view, and to carry on this important negotiation, he made choice of brother Walter de Grassy, prior of the church of Rhodes, and brother Lucius de Valines, grand marshal, and sent them as his ambassadors, to most of the sovereigns of Christendom, to notify to them the pope's election. Their orders were to represent in his name the favourableness of the present juncture for making war upon the Turks ; that the throne of Bajazet had received a terrible shock by the fall of that prince, and by the victories of Tamerlane, and that they might make their advantage of the civil wars risen up between the sons of the turkish prince, who disputed his succession, and the weak remains of his empire.

THE grand master having acquainted the pope with the design of this embassy, received the praises due to his zeal on that account. The holy pontiff told him, that if they could carry their point in that affair, he would declare himself head of the league, and be at the chief expence of the expedition. At the same time he sent a nuncio to Rhodes, to notify his election to brother Dominic of Germany, the grand master's lieutenant, and the council and convent of Rhodes. The pope, though the grand master was near his person, took this step from a particular regard for the whole body of the order, which was always supposed to reside in the isle of Rhodes.

THE

THE pope, to put a final end to the particular schism which had so long infested the order, issued out a bull which he ordered his nuncio to publish over all Christendom, wherein he declared that brother Philebert de Naillac was the only lawful grand master of all the knights of the order of St. John of Jerusalem, enjoining, by virtue of the obedience they owed him, and under pain of excommunication, all the religious of the order, whether knights, chaplains, or serving brothers, in what part of the world soever they might reside, to acknowledge him for their head and only superior.

IN consequence of this bull, the grand master summoned a general chapter at Nice, which was afterwards translated to Aix in Provence ; and in his summons, after representing at large and in a moving manner, the evils which the schism had caused to the whole church in general, and to the order in particular, he orders all priors, and the four oldest commanders of each priory, to appear at the chapter by the first of April, to take measures by concert for the restoring of discipline and the reformation of the order, in the head as well as in the members of it.

THE grand master was preparing to set out for this assembly, where his presence was highly necessary, in order to extinguish the remains of the schism, and restore a perfect union and harmony between all the knights : when the pope, who knew his merit, and the peculiar talent he had for negotiations, obliged him to undertake an embassy from him to the kings of France and England, who were then at war, to mediate a good peace, or at least a long truce between them. The grand master accepted this commission the more willingly, because he considered the peace he was going to treat of as a means to engage those two powerful monarchs to join their forces against the infidels. But not to deprive the order by his absence of the advantages that might be expected from the chapter, he allowed that august assembly to chuse three persons to preside there in his stead ; and the choice of

the members fell upon the brothers James Tivelly prior of Auvergne, Raimond de Lesture prior of Thoulouse, and Philip de Langueglia prior of Lombardy. In this chapter several regulations were made, of very great consequences relating as well to the responsions, which were payable out of the commandries into the common treasury, as to the ill use which certain priors made of their authority. The treasury had during the schism been deprived of all its dues and contributions arising from the commandries situated in England, Scotland, Arragon, and part of Germany ; in the kingdoms of the North, Bohemia, Hungary, and over all Italy ; it was therefore ordered that visitors should be sent into all these countries, to re-establish the right of the order there : and the priors were expressly prohibited from seizing for the future, as some had done, in the commandries within their priories, upon the forests, rights of fishery, those of mort-main and for-marriage, and in a word, upon all the seignioral rights which they had assumed to themselves to the prejudice of the commanders ; and a statute was made, that for the future, every commander, in order to enable him to pay his responsions the more easily, should enjoy all the rights and profits of his commandry, without the prior's appropriating the least part thereof to himself under any pretence whatever. They chose likewise in this chapter an administrator of the treasury, naming for that post brother Raimond de Lesture prior of Thoulouse, and grand commander of Cyprus, a knight very zealous for the interest of his order, and well versed in the direction and ordering of the public revenues. The order made choice of him, in hopes that he would find out an expedient to oblige the commanders of Italy and other countries, who had divided from the body of the order during the schism, to pay the arrears of their responsions, and continue them for the future, with the exactness which their profession required them to observe, with respect to their statutes and the orders of their superiors.

BUT unhappily the schism was not yet extinguished. The council of Pisa, far from terminating that great affair, had only perplexed it the more. Benedict XIII. and Gregory XII. were indeed deposed there, and they had chosen Alexander V. for their successor ; but the two first refused to acknowledge the authority of the council, and each of them maintained his own election with more obstinacy than ever ; so that instead of two popes as they had before, they had now three. These troubles which infested the church, served as a skreen to most of the commanders, who under a pretence of adhering to those two antipopes, refused obeying the grand master, and neglected to pay their responsions.

POPE Alexander V. dying in the beginning of May at Bologna, they were strangely surprised and scandalised to see his place filled by cardinal Baltazar Cossa, legate or rather tyrant of Bologna.^a He had been a pirate in his youth, and afterwards turned ecclesiastic, as thinking it the best profession for him to make his fortune. This change he made without deviating in the least from his first way of life, and one would rather have taken him for a soldier than a man devoted to the service of the altar. His relations procured him afterwards an archdeaconry in the church of Bologna ; but finding that post too narrow for his ambition, he resolved to go to Rome ; and 'tis said, that when he set out on his journey to that capital of the Christian world, his friends asking him whither he was going, " I am " going, says he, to the popedom." Boniface XI. successor to Urban, and one of the popes who kept up the schism, made him his chamberlain ; a dignity in which he had amass'd immense wealth, by employing all the tricks and artifices of simony. But he did not labour for himself only, for he was obliged to account with Boniface, who was as greedy as himself in scraping

ing

^a In cuius electione multi scandalisati sunt, quia ut tyrannus rexisse Bononiam, & vitæ mundanæ deditus dicebatur. Gobillin, in Cosmod, ætatis 6, cap. 30.

ing up riches, and who connived at his pilferings to share the profits with him. Cossa procured the legate-ship of Bologna from him, and a publican or farmer of the revenue made the most of it. They say that it was partly by his credit and intrigues, that after the death of Boniface IX. and Innocent VII. his successor, he got Benedict XIII. and Gregory XII. deposed in the council of Pisa, and Alexander V. elected, whose great age made him flatter himself with the hopes of succeeding him in a little time. But death moving with a flower pace than his ambition, he was suspected of having got him poisoned in a dose of physic. Theodo-
dor of Niem, who was his secretary, in his history of the schism, represents him as a man polluted with avarice, cruelty, and the most abominable inconti-
nency. However, as he was elected canonically, he was enthroned and adored by the name of John XXIII.

THIS change of dignity did not make him alter his conduct ; he was still as loose as ever in his morals, always grasping at other people's wealth, and carrying on a torpid traffic with the most holy things. Sigismon^d the emperor, or only king of the Romans, whom we have had occasion to mention before in quality of king of Hungary, in a conference which he had with this pope at Lodi, opened himself very freely in relation to his irregularities, and pressed him to put an end to the scandal he gave to the whole church by his simony. That prince had desired this interview in order to engage the pope to call a general council. Besides the benefit that might accrue from thence to the whole church, Sigismon^d who had always his own interest in view, and was as great a politician as he was an ill captain, not finding himself in a condition singly to support the war, which the Turks were making upon him in his kingdom of Hungary, flattered himself with the hopes, that if he could but carry his point in extinguis^hing the schism, he might find a way to unite all the christian princes in a league against the infidels. With this view he caressed John XXIII. persuading him

him that he would get him acknowledged in a general council (by the condemnation of Benedict XIII. and Gregory XII.) for the sole pope and pastor of the universal church. But his real design, which indeed he kept to himself, and which was at last discovered by time only, always was to have all the three popes deposed, and a fourth elected, by the concurrence and votes of the cardinals of the three parties. Pope John who did not see thro' this fine political turn, and who stood in fear of the emperor, in order to keep measures with him, called the council at Constance. Besides the rooting out of the schism, which was the chief thing proposed to be done in that august assembly, they were likewise to set about reforming the church in its head and members, and to examine at the same time the doctrine of John Hus and Jerome of Prague, who had revived Wickliff's heretical opinions in Bohemia.

'TWAS expected that the emperor's remonstrances, and especially the calling of a general council, would keep the pope or the officers of the apostolical chamber in some awe ; but it made no alteration in their conduct. The order of St. John suffered in a particular manner upon that account : the pope, or such as made use of his authority, in consideration of a large sum of money, issued out a bull, by which licence was given to a certain knight commander, who had made his vows, to renounce them, and to quit the habit of the order, and marry. The sovereign pontiff at the same time caused the commandry, which that religious enjoyed, to be resigned to him ; and they say, he sold it afterwards to a boy not fourteen years old, whom he dispensed with from taking the habit and making his vows. He carried these sorts of dispensations still farther, in favour of another child but five years old, named Aloyse or Alexis, natural son to the king of Cyprus, whom he suffered, in consideration of a rich commandry, which he sold to the king his father, to make the vows of the order at that age.

FROM the same principle of avarice, and without any regard to the important services done by the order to all Christendom, he seized on all the priories and commandries that he heard were fallen vacant, and sold them afterwards to such as offered most money, so that the convent of Rhodes, or rather the whole order, was in danger of being utterly ruined by his avarice.

THIS was the occasion of a letter which the council wrote to him in the strongest as well as most moving terms. In this letter they represented to him with a generous liberty, that the knights, who resided at Rhodes, and in the neighbouring isles, were to signalize their zeal against the enemies of the faith, shedding their blood daily in the defence of the Christians that went to visit the holy places ; that themselves, as well as their predecessors, had, at entering into the order, founded several commandries out of their own patrimony. That most of the Christian princes, edified with their zeal, had followed their example in making those pious foundations ; that his holiness, by seizing on those estates, or bestowing them on his creatures, was going to deprive Rhodes of its gallant defenders, and the convent of the necessary supplies for its subsistence ; that the oldest knights had always looked upon those commandries as the just recompence of their services, and the only means of relief in their old age ; and that if he went on to deprive them thereof, they would soon see the isle of Rhodes abandoned as a prey to the infidels, and every knight unable to subsist there any longer, seeking at last a refuge among his relations ; which could not fail of redounding to the great scandal of Christendom, and the dishonour of the holy see.

FOUND as the pope was of his sovereign power over all ecclesiastical possessions, the just complaints of the order, and his fear of the knights laying them before the council, served to counter-balance his avarice. He revoked the grant that he had made of the commandry of Cyprus in favour of the bastard abovementioned ; but

but as he never did any favour or act of justice gratis, he could not bring himself to pay the king of Cyprus back the money that he had received in hand ; the order was forced to re-imburse it out of their own treasury ; and after the council, in order to get rid of this oppression, had submitted to such hard conditions, he exacted six thousand florins more from them in ready money, before he would issue out the brief of revocation.

WE pass over in silence other excesses of his, still more shocking, which are mentioned by historians, and the very acts of the council, though it were indeed to be wished they had drawn a veil over them. We shall only say, that though the pontiff, out of regard to the emperor, had appointed the council to be held at Constance, an imperial city, situated between Suabia and Switzerland, he yet came thither with great reluctance, as if he had foreboding apprehensions of the fate that awaited him in that place.

It is said, that when he was arrived near the city, viewing it with some concern from the top of a neighbouring mountain, he could not help saying, with an heavy smile, “ There is the hole where they catch foxes.” But as he had gone too far to return back, he entered the place, attended by the cardinals and his whole court : he opened the council on the first day of November, and appointed the first session to be held on the sixteenth of the same month. There passed in this council things that will be ever memorable ; the prosecution and deposing of two popes ; the voluntary or forced abdication of a third ; the canonical and lawful election of a fourth ; the re-union of all the churches of the west under his obedience ; the execution of John Hus, and Jerome of Prague ; the civil war that broke out on that occasion in Bohemia ; the various springs made use of to bring about such great events ; all this has been treated of by such learned pens, that we shall only say, with regard to the particular design of our work, that after the deposing of

John

John XXII. the cession of Gregory XII. and the condemnation of Benedict XIII. when they were to fill the chair of St. Peter, the holy council, in order to avoid the cabals so usual in the conclaves of the cardinals, and provide a worthy head for the universal church, ordered, in the fortieth session, that for this once, and by consent of the cardinals, six ecclesiastical deputies, out of each of the five nations which composed that august assembly, should be joined with them to make this important election.

IN fine, upon Thursday the eleventh of November, fifty-eight electors gave their votes for Otho Colonna, cardinal deacon of the title of St. George, a velo aureo, who in memory of St. Martin of Tours, whose feast was kept that day, would be called Martin, and was the fifth of the name. This pope was descended from one of the most noble houses, not only of Italy but of all Christendom, which has in various ages produced great men and heroes of all characters. Such as have since descended from this noble race, have, by their great actions, reflected back as much lustre as ever they derived from their ancestors.

THE pope, after the forty-fifth session, dismissed the fathers of the council on April 25th, with 1418. the usual ceremonies ; and those prelates who had so long been kept at a distance from their respective dioceses, set out on their journey back with pleasure. The grand master would have been glad to have returned at the same time to Rhodes ; the necessities of the order called him back, and he was invited thither by the ardent wishes of all his knights, who had made several processions and public prayers for his preservation and return. But his zeal for the whole body of the order did not allow him to quit Europe so soon : all he could do was to send eighteen thousand crowns out of his own purse to Rhodes, in order to relieve the wants of the convent there, which, by the unhappy consequences of the schism, was reduced to an extreme indigence.

WE have seen a little before, in the course of this history, that the fatal schism, which had infested the church for above forty years, had occasioned a like division in the order of St. John, and that most of the European knights adhered to such of the popes as their sovereigns followed. The unanimous election of Martin V. having put an end to these different parties among christian princes, the next business was to root them out likeways in the order, and re-unite to the body of it all the various members that had separated themselves from it, and particularly the Italian knights, who, notwithstanding the decrees and particular ordinance of pope Alexander V. had, under pretence that Gregory XII. would not own the authority of the council of Pisa, persevered in the obedience of that antipope, under the authority of the pretended lieutenants of the mastership. The grand master, after the voluntary cession of Gregory XII. and the unanimous election of Martin V. considered that the most important affair of his order would be to efface the least foot-steps of this unhappy schism.

But as he could not undertake any thing without the consent and concurrence of the principal persons of the order, he called an assembly of the priors, receivers, and oldest commanders of France, Spain and Savoy, at Avignon. The grand master acquainted them with the reasons of that particular convocation, and after various opinions had been proposed and debated, they agreed in one that suited the republican government of the order, which was, to call a general chapter at Rhodes, and summon the greatest number of priors and old commanders that could possibly be got together to it ; and withal to send a particular deputation to the priors of Lombardy, Venice, Rome and Pisa, who had been till then averse to own the grand master's authority, in order that their re-union to the entire body of the order might be authorised by the decrees of a general chapter ; or else that that august assembly, in which the sovereignty of the order was

vested, might decree such penalties as they should think proper, against the disobedient and refractory.

WITH this view they commissioned brother John de Patru, the conventional treasurer, to go into Italy; and to authorise him with proper power, the grand master gave him the title of visitor and corrector in the four priories above-mentioned: and his orders were to demand of them the re-establishment of their respondents, which had not been paid ever since the beginning of the schism. A proposal of this nature, though undoubtedly just, was not without great difficulties. The business in question was to levy a sort of tribute or tax upon a set of men that had been bred for above forty years together in a spirit of independency. However, as those knights had adhered to the Italian popes, only out of a notion, that they alone of all the competitors were the rightful successors of St. Peter, and had submitted to them in the sincerity of their heart; these, as soon as they had account of the voluntary cession of Gregory XII. and the unanimous election of Martin V. readily acknowledged this last pontiff; and from the same disposition, received the visitor with respect, making protestations of their filial obedience to the grand master, and promising to come to Rhodes to the general chapter, in order to receive its decrees in person, and conform themselves to them in every article.

THE priors of Capua and Barletta, the commanders of St. Euphemia, Venusia, Naples, and St. Stephen de Monopoli, and all the knights of the kingdom of Naples, excited by their example, dispatched the chevalier de la Porte to the grand master, with a letter drawn up in the form of a legal instrument, wherein they acknowledged him for their lawful superior, and demanded with earnestness to be received immediately into an union with the body of the order, from which they said they had been separated by the misfortune of the times.

THEIR deputy met with the grand master at Bologna. That brave old man, notwithstanding his great age,

age, and the fatigues he must necessarily pass through in such continual voyages, had come to Florence to confer with the pope, in order to find out an expedient to engage the most potent Christian princes in a league against the sons of Bajazet, who began to make themselves formidable ; and after having taken leave of the pontiff, he went to Bologna, where the envoy from Naples met him. The grand master was greatly pleased to see all his order united at last together, and informed with the same spirit of submission and obedience. His answer to the Neapolitan knights was, that now he had received such a declaration of their submission and re-union with the body of the order, he had nothing more to wish for before he died ; that he invited them to come to the general chapter that was to be held at Rhodes on the eighth of September that very year ; and that in order to prepare the matters which were to be treated of in that place, it would be proper for them to meet him at Ancona, to deliberate together about them in an assembly which he would hold there before the end of March.

THE bailiffs, the priors, and the principal commanders of Italy, did not fail to come to the assembly. Brother John Pignatelli, commander of St. Stephen of Monopoli, was the only person, who, though expressly summoned, neglected to appear there. The grand master was at first of opinion to take no notice of the only person that proved refractory to his orders : he saw plainly that it was the dregs, and a sort of leaven of the same rebellious spirit that had caused such a destructive schism in the order ; but as he was for extinguishing even the least sparks of it, he ordered him to be summoned a second time to appear before him, allowing him only to the fifteenth of April for that purpose. The commander persisted in an obstinate silence ; and the grand master was forced to send him a third summons, enjoining him upon his obedience to come to Rhodes within five months, on pain of being degraded from the order, and deprived of his commandry. He persisted even some time longer in his

disobedience; but seeing preparations made for executing the grand master's orders against him, he made his submission and returned to his duty. The next thing the assembly applied themselves to, was to restore the regular discipline in all the provinces of Italy: several very necessary regulations were there made; what was less urgent was put off to the general chapter, and every body prepared to set out immediately for Rhodes.

THE grand master embarked soon after, and arrived safe at Rhodes towards the end of July, where he was received with universal joy, and with that tender respect which a great merit, supported by a great dignity, always inspires. The people in particular, to whom he was a father rather than a prince, made bonfires on the day of his return, which was kept as a general feast all over the island. The grand master's first care was to examine into the state of the magazines; and finding that the badness of the last harvest had raised the price of corn, he sent ships immediately to several ports of Italy, to fetch corn of all sorts from thence, which brought back plenty into his territories.

THIS great man afterwards opened the general chapter. There had not for a considerable time been held any one so remarkable, either for the number of persons that composed it, or for the importance of the matters there treated of. Here appeared for the first time most of the knights that had been before engaged in the schism, and had insensibly, though with good intentions, transgressed the bounds of their duty. They all returned to it: the priors and bailiffs of Italy, England, the kingdoms of the North, Bohemia, Hungary and Arragon, made a solemn recognition of the grand master as their head and only superior: the schism was never mentioned but with detestation: the knights, who had been under different obediences in order to celebrate their re-union, embraced one another with joy; and both considering it as the result of the grand master's wisdom, strove to guess at his intentions, and anticipate them by conforming themselves to them.

The

The great and only object they all had in view was the glory of God, and the defence of their fellow Christians ; so that before the chapter broke up, he easily got several decrees passed, very necessary for the re-establishment of discipline, and the regulation of the revenues of the order. He sent the records of this chapter to the pope, who ratified them by his authority. 'Twas the seal which that wise pontiff put to the peace and union of the order ; and it was likeways the last transaction that passed under the government of this grand master. It looked as if he waited only for the news of it, in order to quit life with greater satisfaction. He fell ill a little while after he had received the pope's brief, and without 1421. any preparation but that of an holy Life, ended his days with a tranquility that may be considered as a presage of the felicity which heaven designed for him. His place was filled by brother Anthony Fluvian, or de la Riviere, of the priory ANTHONY-
of Catalonia, standard-bearer of the or- FLUVIAN.
der, and grand prior of Cyprus, or great conservator and lieutenant to his predecessor. The peace which the order had enjoyed in the last years of the mastership of Naillac, was interrupted by several enterprises of the infidels ; and the knights saw themselves successively attacked by the Turks of Asia, and by the Saracens of Egypt.

WE have seen in the beginning of this book, in what manner the Ottoman power had like to have been entirely destroyed by the valour and good fortune of Tamerlane, and the captivity and death of Bajazet. This last prince left four sons, Ysa or Joshua, Musa or Musulman, Moses and Mahomet. Joshua, after Tamerlane's death, recovered Bursa from the Moguls, and would have made a greater progress, had he not been obliged to turn his arms against Musulman, who, supported by a body of troops, which the emperor of Constantinople furnished him with, advances against his brother, attacks, beats, takes him prisoner, and causes him to be strangled. Moses, who seemed only to wait

the success of this civil war, before he declared himself, appears upon the stage with a strong army, seizes on Adrianople, and offers battle to his brother, but was betrayed by the Bulgarians in his army, who deserted him in the heat of the engagement. Moses knowing very well the fate allotted to the vanquished, flies and gets into Adrianople, reserving himself for another occasion. He gathers together and rallies the remains of his army, bribes Chafan aga of the Janizaries, and Ebrenzez commander of the Spahi, who come over to his party. With this reinforcement he again marches against his brother, defeats his army, and getting him into his power, causes him to be strangled.

THE Greek emperor, to foment this civil war among the Turks, sets up Mahomet Zelebin, i. e. the young, against Moses : he was the last of Bajazet's sons, and during the misfortunes of his family, had been hid in the house of a lute-string maker. 'Tis said that he learned the trade, and that those who were entrusted with his education did not let him know the greatness of his extraction, the better to conceal him. However it was, this young prince, with the succours of the Greeks, of the prince of Carmania, and of the despot of Serbia, levies an army ; and though he had never made a campaign before, advances to attack his brother, and offers him battle, which he loses. Notwithstanding his defeat, he, by the assistance of his allies, levies new troops, and again advances towards his brother, holding at the same time a secret correspondence with some persons in his army. Chafan aga of the Janizaries, and Ebrenzez commander of the spahi, who had betrayed Masulman to serve Moses, now abandon this prince and go over to the army of Mahomet. The aga carried his rebellion and perfidiousness still farther ; and before the two armies engaged, he advanced to the first ranks, endeavouring by seditious discourses to corrupt the Janizaries that were left in Moses's party. This prince, provoked at his impudence and treason, rides up to him, and with his scymitar in hand, aims at his head, but was prevented by Chafan's squire, who cut off his sword

sword hand. This unlucky accident decided the victory and his life ; his soldiers seeing him return into their ranks with but one hand, and all over bloody, interpreted his wound as a manifestation of his being proscribed by heaven ; upon which they deserted him, and went to lay their standards and colours at the feet of Mahomet.

THE victorious prince caused Moses, who was found hid in a marsh, to be first secured, and afterwards strangled, becoming by his death assured of the crown, and of reigning without a competitor. The Turkish historians do not put Yfa or Joshua, Musulman, nor Moses, who reigned one after another, in the list of their emperors, but reckon all that passed from Bajazet's death till Mahomet I. as an interregnum. But all the Greek authors place these princes among the sultans ; and as the history of the Ottomans makes part of that of the knights of St. John their perpetual enemies, we could not help giving a summary account of the success of the civil wars which infested that new empire, till the advancement of Mahomet I. upon the throne of his ancestors. This prince enjoyed the sovereign authority peaceably during the eight years which he reigned, and was succeeded by Amurath II. his eldest son, one of the greatest princes of that nation. The conquests of this last blotted out the remembrance of those of Tamerlane, and restored the Ottoman empire to its former splendor. His arms were equally successful in Europe and in Asia. The Caramanian and other infidel princes of the east felt their fury, as well as the Albanians, Hungarians and Transalpine Wallachians. He ravaged those great provinces, making most of the sovereigns tributaries to him, and would have extended his conquests still farther, had not a stop been put to them by Scanderbeg, the son of John Castriot king of Albania, on one side, and by John Huniades Vaivod of Transylvania, and general of the troops of Hungary, on the other, both of them the greatest captains of their age, who with an inconsiderable number of forces, but supported by an intrepid courage,

courage, and the most exquisite experience in war, checked the rapid progress of his arms.

HE afterwards turned them against several princes that possessed places in the Morea, and in the isles of the Archipelago. All these petty sovereigns had recourse to the order of St. John, and engaged the bailiff of the Morea to go to Rhodes to implore the succour of the grand master. That prince, actuated by the spirit of his order, resolved, in concert with the council, to send some gallies into those seas, in order to discover the design of the infidels. But as they were preparing to put some troops on board, there came advice that the prince of Scanderoon or Alexandretta, in conjunction with other vassals of the grand seignior, was actually at sea, with a fleet composed of vessels of different bulk, and six gallies belonging to the lord of Scanderoon. The grand master readily suspected their design to be against Rhodes, or at least against the neighbouring isles which depended on the order. This news suspended the succours designed for the Morea. They fitted out all the gallies of the order and sailed in quest of the enemies fleet : but as the infidels did not care to come to a decisive battle, they avoided an engagement ; and in order to make themselves amends for the expence of this armament, they took some merchant ships of Rhodes and Venice.

WHILST the knights and the Turks, equally animated against one another, were roving up and down the seas, ravaging the coasts, where they could make any descent, and labouring to surprise one another, there started up a new enemy to the order, who was almost as near Rhodes as the Turks, but more formidable, on account of his maritime forces, his fleets, and particularly from the skilfulness of his subjects in navigation, in which they excelled, especially since he began his reign. I speak of the famous sultan of Egypt Alnazer-al-Daher, a Circassian by birth, whom the Mamelukes had raised to the throne. They admitted none into that body, which was the strongest in Egypt, but foreign slaves ; and these generally were young chil-

ren that had either been taken by the Tartars in their incursions, or else sold to them by their unnatural parents. The Egyptians bought all they could, and brought up these young men in exercises suitable to the profession they designed them for ; and when they were able to bear arms, they incorporated them into the body of the Mamalukes. 'Twas in this manner, that Daher, whom we are speaking of, was admitted into that body ; and after many long years of service, and a great series of glorious actions and distinguished valour, was at last advanced to the sovereign power, which by the laws of that body could never devolve from father to son, or descend to his heirs.

DAHER in order to maintain himself in a dignity subject to frequent revolutions, from the inconstancy and seditious temper of the Mamalukes, and also to find employment for their courage, declared war against Janus of Lusignan king of Cyprus. His fleet landed a considerable army in the island. The king immediately applied to the order for assistance ; and tho' the knights were then at peace with the Saracens, the grand master and council could not see their arms so near the isle of Rhodes, without fearing some unhappy consequences to the order from that war. As the territories belonging to it were situated between those of the Turkish emperor and the sultan of Egypt, the council was always so politic as to maintain peace with one of those infidel princes, whilst it was engaged in war with the other. Agreeable to this maxim they could have wished to have had no quarrel with the Saracens, whilst they were at war with the Turks. The grand master, in this view, omitted nothing that might contribute to the bringing about a peace between the sultan of Egypt and the king of Cyprus ; but as the Egyptian regulated his pretensions by his forces, he insisted that the king of Cyprus should acknowledge himself his vassal, and as such, pay him and his successors an annual tribute, and should likewise re-imburse him all the expence he had been at in that armament and expedition.

THESE conditions were too hard to be accepted ; so that there was a necessity of deciding the dispute by arms. Acts of hostility were begun on both sides. The order, as an ally of the crown of Cyprus, sent over considerable succours at different times. The war proved long and bloody. At last they came to a battle, the particulars of which we are unacquainted with. We only know in general, that the Christians lost it, and that a great number of Cypriot lords and gentlemen, and several knights of St. John, were slain at the same time. The Saracens had a compleat victory, and the king, to make the misfortune still greater, fell into the hands of the infidels, who carried him to Alexandria.

THE grand master hearing this bad news, and fearing the infidels might seize on the whole island, sent over new succours of men and money, and gave secret assurances to the principal lords of the kingdom, that the order would never abandon them, provided they would not abandon themselves ; and that they should take up a noble resolution to die sword in hand rather than submit to the Mahometans. But those lords, divided among themselves, and effeminated by pleasures, not discovering any great courage and resolution, sent, by the grand master's advice, ambassadors to Egypt, to the sultan's court, to treat for the ransom of their sovereign. The negotiation was spun out a great length. The sultan, in hopes that his troops would soon reduce the whole island, was every day starting new difficulties ; but the Egyptian general soon found a stop put to the progress of his arms by the valour of the knights. By way of revenge, he ravaged the great commandry or bailliage which the order possessed in that island, demolishing the houses, cutting down the trees, and rooting up the vines ; so that this great commandry, which was reckoned the richest of the order, was entirely ruined. The sultan too resolved to turn the efforts of his arms against the isle of Rhodes, hoping that if he could make himself master of it, that of Cyprus, being left destitute of the succours of the knights, would of course

course fall into his hands. And as ambitious princes seldom set any bounds to their projects, the sultan flattered himself, that the conquest of the isles of Rhodes and Cyprus would pave the way to that of all the isles of the Archipelago ; and that after this, Asia minor could never resist a power so formidable as his would then be. Full of such vast designs, the dangers and difficulties of which his ambition concealed from him, he again set the negotiation on foot with the ambassadors of Cyprus. His ministers set a price upon the king's liberty, and demanded an hundred and twenty thousand florins of gold for his ransom. The prince rejected this proposal, not only because he looked on the sum as too extravagant, but also because he wanted money, his exchequer being quite exhausted by the war. But the grand master, who was afraid lest the Saracens should at last seize on the isle of Cyprus, advised him to get out of the hands of those barbarians at any rate ; and the order, to facilitate his liberty, supplied him with the greatest part of his ransom. Peace was made on these conditions.

THE sultan, to amuse the grand master, and under pretence of desiring to maintain a lasting peace with the order, renewed at the same time the treaty which the sultan his predecessor had made during the mastership of Naillac. But the grand master, who paid for good intelligence, and kept spies in Alexandria, and even in that prince's council, was soon informed of his most secret designs. To prevent being surprised by the Barbarian, he immediately sent advice of it to pope Eugenius IV. and to most of the christian princes, transmitting at the same time a general summons into all parts of the christian world, with express injunctions to the priors to send away forthwith 25 knights or commanders out of each priory to Rhodes. But a much greater number of them arrived, whom zeal and courage had drawn thither ; part of them were kept at Rhodes, and the rest distributed into the isles belonging to the order. Brother Hugh de Sarcus, grand prior of France, sent to the capital of the order a ship laden

laden with cross-bows, arrow-heads, and other arms necessary for the defence of the place. The grand master took care to supply it with corn and all sorts of provisions: in fine, this worthy chief, by his vigilance and activity, put himself in so good a posture to receive the enemy, that the news of his armament soon passed into Egypt; and the sultan flattering himself that the order could not long maintain so great a number of knights, thought fit to suspend his enterprise.

THIS great expence however having emptied the treasury of the order, the grand master, to fill it again, resolved to call a general chapter at Rhodes, as the custom was in those times: the priors generally brought to the chapters the responsions of the commandries that lay within their priories, with a list of those who had not discharged that obligation: and as it was impossible for the order to maintain so many different wars against the infidels without this supply, the chapter decreed severe penaltys against such as were negligent and refractory, endeavouring at the same time by new citations, to raise the necessary funds for the armaments of the order.

'TWAS with this design, and with a view of restoring a regularity in discipline, that the grand master called the chapter at Rhodes, to be held there on May 23. 1428. at which, among a great number of priors, bailiffs, and commanders, were also brother John de Vivone, prior of Aquitain, and lieutenant to the grand master in the three languages of France; brother John de Ventadour, great commander; brother Anthony de St. Chamand, marshal of the order; brother John de Lastic, prior of Auvergne; brother Gratian de la Tour, bailiff of the commerce of Rhodes, and several other old knights of different nations.

THE grand master opened the chapter with a discourse, in which he represented the unavoidable expences the order had been obliged to put themselves to, both in defending the island of Cyprus, as well as in guarding against the sultan's ill designs, the consequences

sequences of which were always to be feared ; that Rhodes and the islands which depended on it, if they did not keep up a sufficient body of forces, could never be secured from the attempts of Amurath ; and that the order supported itself only by the jealousy that was fomented between the Turks and Saracens, two formidable powers, which it would be hard to resist, if from a zeal for a religion that was common to both, they should join their forces against the order ; that in this situation nothing came into the treasury out of the priories of France, the commandries of which had been ruined in the war carried on by the English in that kingdom ; that Bohemia, Moravia, and Silesia, being harassed by the Hussites, did not furnish any quota to the order ; that Poland being engaged in a war against the Teutonic knights, scarce kept up any correspondence with Rhodes ; and that it was the business of the chapter, by some wise regulations, to re-establish, as near as possible, the responsions on the old footing, which those several nations seemed entirely to have forgot.

THE chapter, out of regard to these just remonstrances, and to make up the fund of the responsions of France, granted leave to alienate several lands belonging to the commandries of the order to secular persons, for whom they lay convenient, provided always that such alienations were made only for life, and at a certain rate. With the same view, they, by the next statute, erected a new dignity in the language of Germany, that of great bailiff, and annexed to it an inspection and authority over all the priories and commandries lying in Germany, particularly in Bohemia and the adjoining provinces, where the Hussites had made cruel ravages ever since the execution of John Hus and Jerom of Prague at the council of Constance. To the authority and functions of grand bailiff of Germany, they annexed likewise the inspection over the governor and castle of St. Peter, a strong place in Caria, built, as we have observed, near or upon the foundations of the old city of Halicarnassus, and serv-

ing for a bulwark to the isle of Rhodes on the side of Asia minor and the main land. The great bailiff was to visit this place every year, either in person or by his lieutenant. He was empowered by his commission to review the garrison ; to break useless soldiers ; to fill up their places with others more capable of serving : in a word, every thing that concerned the defence of that castle and its territory was put under his jurisdiction, except only the household and officers of the governor, and some soldiers, who after the taking of Smyrna by the Mogul Tartars, had thrown themselves into the sea, and swimming to the ships of the order that lay at anchor, escaped the fury of those barbarians. The order by way of recompence for their valour, had assigned them this place as a retirement for the rest of their lives, where they were taken care of, and maintained at the public expence. The chapter had afterwards given the island of Nizzaro to brother Fantin Quirini, prior of Rome, by an infeofment, on condition of paying an annual rent of 600 florins of gold to the public treasury ; of maintaining there, at his own expence, a garrison necessary for its defence ; and of giving subsistence to two knights and a serving brother. 'Twas then the custom in all the priories of the order, that when they admitted a young knight, they assigned him at the same time a commandry for his residence, the commander whereof was to subsist and maintain him, and bring him up in the spirit of the order, till such time as he was qualified to go to Rhodes.

By this wise regulation, the practice of which it were to be wished might be restored, no young knights were to be seen wandering about in cities and provinces, and often without having any thing religious about them but the cross of the order, which some still wear rather as a badge of distinction that flatters their vanity, than as a mark of the obligations they have entered into before the altar, of leading an holy and regular life.

BE that as it will, at present we find in the annals of the order, that the commander of Cagnac desiring to be excused from receiving into his house a young knight called brother William de Riery, who had been assigned the commandry of Cagnac for his residence ; the commander, whether he pretended that his house was too full of pupils, or that it was the turn of the commander of St. Sulpice, sent him to him. This latter refused to receive him, and complained to the grand master, who being very justly angry at the commander of Cagnac, threatened to deprive him of his habit and commandry, if he neglected to provide for the young knight whom the order had committed to his care ; a circumstance which I should not have taken notice of, had it not served to shew, that in the middle of the fifteenth age, near 400 years after the first institution of the order, all the commandries of it were like so many seminaries and academies, where the knights were alike educated in piety and the exercise of arms, two qualities, which though they happen not to meet together in secular persons, may nevertheless form great men in each particular kind, but which ought to be ever united in a knight of the order of St. John.

'TWAS from the same spirit of regularity, and to keep the knights the more closely to their residence, that the grand master forbad them, by an express bull, to go to Rome, and settle in the pope's court, without his permission, or that of the procurator general of the order. He made this wise regulation in order to check the restless and ambitious humour of some knights, who the sooner to possess themselves of the commandries and principal dignities, instead of meriting them by their services, sought to get them by recommendation from the pope or his cardinals, who had the greatest hand in the government of the church. Thus was it that the grand master, in the interval which the truce made with the sultan of Egypt allowed him, employed his authority to maintain a regularity of discipline among his religious. To make their abode in the isle and

convent of Rhodes more convenient for them, he built a magnificent infirmary upon the foundations of the old one, endowing it at his own expence. According to the spirit and constant practice of the order, such knights as were sick or wounded, were visited and taken care of there, with all the regard and attention due to noble personages, that represented the conquerors of the isle, and were every day defending the possession and sovereignty of it at the expence of their blood.

IN the practice of these peaceful virtues, did the grand master Anthony Fluvian, or de la Riviere, end 1437. his days. He saw the approaches of death without any disturbance, and great piety : and desiring to die as he had always lived, a true religious, he disposed of all his effects, and sent 200,000 ducats into the treasury, the fruit of his thriftness and retrenchments from that magnificence which luxury and vanity at that time required of such as filled the first dignities in the church.

THE chapter assembled immediately to provide him a successor, and the members of it had recourse to arbitration : they first made choice of 13 knights, to whom the chapter referred the right of election. These 13 electors prepared themselves for it by receiving the sacraments of penance and the holy eucharist : they afterwards shut themselves up in a room distinct from the chapter-house, and after a careful examination of the merit of the several candidates, of their personal qualities, and especially of those which were most proper for government, they unanimously gave their votes

in favour of brother JOHN DE LASTIC,
JOHN DE LASTIC grand prior of Auvergne, who was acknowledged in form by all the chapter as
1437. grand master of the order. As that lord was then at his priory, they immediately dispatched two grand crosses to carry him the instrument of his election ; but before these deputies set out for Rhodes, the convent made them take an oath, that they would not ask any favour of him before he had taken

taken possession of his dignity, none especially that might be to the prejudice of the senior knights of the order.

THE grand master, upon the news of his election, made the best of his way for Rhodes. As soon as he arrived there, he received advice from the spies which the order kept in Egypt, that secret designs were forming in that kingdom against the isle of Rhodes, and what was still worse, these spies informed him, that they suspected that Amurath II. emperor of the Turks, approved this enterprize, or at least would not oppose it.

THE emulation and jealousy between those two neighbouring powers had served hitherto as a kind of succour to the order: but Amurath being uneasy at the league made against him by the christian princes, was well enough satisfied that the sultan of Egypt should at this juncture find employment for all the forces of the knights. However, as they were not yet fully acquainted with that prince's intentions, the grand master sent brother John Morel, prior of the church, to him, as his ambassador, under pretence of notifying his election to him, and to demand of him a renewing of the truce which the order had made with his predecessor. 'Twas a common practice in the order, and which the popes had authorized, for the knights to make a truce with one party of infidel, at the same time they were opposing another. The prior of Rhodes executed his commission with great skill and address. The grand seignor returned the civilities paid him in the new grand master's name, with other compliments, but expressed in general terms that carried no meaning with them; declining at the same time to enter into any negotiation, under pretence that the old treaties were sufficient for the security of both sides. The prior returned to Rhodes, and acquainted the grand master, that though war was not declared, yet peace was not the more to be depended on. The grand master, in order to discover, if possible, the designs of the infidels, sent William de Lastic his nephew, ienel,

chal of the order, with two vessels, towards the coast of Egypt and Barbary. This knight was not long before he returned to Rhodes, and acquainted the grand master that he would be immediately attacked by all the forces of Egypt. The certainty of war made the knights arm without loss of time ; they fitted out eight gallies, four ships with high decks, and several transport vessels, putting a considerable body of troops on board of them, working at the same time in the isle of Rhodes, and those adjacent to it, in order to put the principal places in a condition of defence.

THE sultan on his side put to sea a considerable fleet, consisting of eighteen gallies, a great number of vessels of different bulk, well provided with arms, and laden with a considerable body of cross-bow-men and land forces. But to give some colour to this armament, the sultan pretended, that the isle of Rhodes, as well as that of Cyprus, depended formerly on the empire of Egypt. The first attempt made by his forces, was upon a little island called Chateau-roux, situated an hundred miles to the east of the isle of Rhodes, and only a mile, or at most a French league, from Lycia. This isle, or rather this rock, belonged to the order, who had fortified it with a castle, over the gate of which the arms of the order of St. John, and those of Arragon, were quartered ; a circumstance which might incline us to believe that it was the language of that nation which had fortified this little place.

THE Saracens met with little opposition in making their descent, and in all probability seized on this little castle with the like ease ; at least there is no passage in history that takes notice of any considerable combat that happened ; they re-embarked after having destroyed this settlement, sailed for Rhodes, and appeared off the island on September 25th, 1440.

THE inhabitants emulating the example and care of the grand master and his knights, had taken arms, and lining the coasts, appeared resolute to oppose the infidels, if they should offer to make a descent. The marshal of the order, who, by virtue of that post, had

the

the command of the fleet, sailed out of the port in good order, and though he was much inferior to the enemy in number of ships, yet he advanced boldly and offered them battle. The infidels, who imagined that all the ships of the order were out a cruizing, were surprized to see this armament, and retired into a bay, where turning the poops of their ships towards the land, they contented themselves with making a great fire with their artillery, to keep the Christians at a distance. They were answered in the same manner; the rest of the day passed in cannonading one another, and night coming on, the Christian fleet put into the port of Rhodes, the commander of it designing, after he had taken in some powder and fresh troops, to return immediately in quest of the enemy: but the Saracens seeing that it was impracticable to attack Rhodes in sight of the christian fleet, set sail in the night. Their design was to surprise the isle of Lango. The marshal, whose experience supplied the place of spies, guessing at their design, put out to sea at the same time, and crowding all the sail he could, and his men plying their oars, he advanced with great expedition under the cannon of the castle of Lango, so that the Saracens, when they came up, were strangely surprised to find him in their front, drawn up in the order of battle, and offering to fight them a second time.

THE Egyptian admiral, astonished at this, tacked about to avoid an engagement, and got to an island which belonged to the Turks; and entering into the harbour, which seemed in a manner abandoned, he joined his gallies to one another, with their prows towards the sea, and erected batteries upon them, to repulse the knights if they should offer to attack him; and the Turks, who inhabited the island, knowing Amurath's intentions, and influenced likeways by the religion which they professed in common with the Saracens, ran to their succour against the Christians.

THE marshal, who had followed the Egyptian fleet without losing sight of it, seeing it so well fortised, called a council of war. Most of the officers, in order

to dissuade him from attacking the infidels, represented to him their number and forces, which were much superior to those of the order ; and besides, there was a bad bottom in that place, it being filled with a quick sand that was very dangerous. They were all for returning to Rhodes ; but the marshal, who did not know what danger was, told them that the knights of St. John were never used to count the number of their enemies, and that he would sooner chuse to meet with a grave in the sea, than ly under the reproach of seeing the barbarians so near him, without daring to attack them. But as his capacity was no ways inferior to his valour, he put his troops on board flat-bottomed vessels, that drew less water, and advancing at their head, being covered at the same time by his artillery, he attacked the Saracens, who received him with a smart fire from their cannon and muskets. If the attack was brisk, the defence was equally as brave, and the Saracens, supported by the Turks, exerted themselves to the utmost, in order to hinder the Christians from approaching their gallies. The night coming on, parted the combatants ; the infidels lost above seven hundred men on this occasion, and on the Christians side they did not compute above sixty. The marshal, covered over with the blood of his enemies, and wounded in five several places, made for Rhodes, upon some signs of bad weather, and for fear of a storm, which the pilots were threatened with. The infidels took the advantage of his retreat, to get out of those seas in the night time, and came first off the isle of Cyprus : there they made a descent, and set fire to the great commandry of the order, which was all the advantage the sultan had from an armament and expedition which had put him to a considerable expence.

THIS ill success served only to exasperate him the more : he dissembled however his resentment, and the designs he had in view, in order to have an opportunity of falling upon them with a greater force. But the grand master was not imposed upon : new fortifications were by his orders added to the city of Rhodes,

and

and he supplied the magazines with ammunition and provisions. These first instances of his care were followed with a general citation, summoning all the knights able to bear arms, to repair to the convent : and the prince granted at the same time a general pardon to all exiles and criminals, excepting such as were guilty of high treason, and incendiaries. He carried his views farther, and sent ambassadors to most of the courts of Europe to sollicit succours. These ambassadors did not fail to lay before those sovereigns the power and forces of the sultan of Egypt, and to represent that that infidel prince was ready to lay siege to Rhodes ; and that if they should abandon the order in this juncture, all that the knights could expect, after a long defence, would be to bury themselves under the ruins of the place ; but that the christian princes would ly under an eternal reproach, should they suffer the ruin of an island and a state, that served for a bulwark to Christendom, and which, by its lying so near to the holy land, might facilitate the conquest of it. The several princes, to whom these ambassadors were sent, made no other return to all these just remonstrances, than by employing a few empty expressions of an useless compassion. Most of them, detained at home by wars with their neighbours, did not think it proper to leave their dominions in such a juncture : besides, the first fire of devotion, which had produced so many crusades, was now in a manner spent ; and a great many looked upon those transports of piety, either as a result of a mistaken and irregular zeal, or perhaps as one of those springs which politicians set a-going, in order to send away those princes and great men whom they thought too potent, and too jealous of the privileges of their dignity, at a distance from their country, and keep them there on a pretence of devotion.

Be that as it will, the order obtained no succours from the christian princes in this juncture. John Paleologus, emperor of Constantinople, was the only one that made a league offensive and defensive with them against the sultan of Egypt ; but this league produced nothing

nothing but a treaty that had no manner of consequence or effect. Of all those vast dominions that had belonged formerly to the empire of the great Constantine, nothing was then left to Paleologus but only the city of Constantinople, with its adjoining territory. The Turks kept that prince blocked up as it were on all sides; so that out of regard to his own preservation, and for fear of seeing himself speedily besieged, he durst not part with the succours which he had stipulated to send to Rhodes. This insignificant treaty was followed by another made with the sultan of Egypt himself, which indeed seemed to be something more advantageous; but that prince, who was an excellent politician, concluded it only with a design of amusing the grand master.

SIR Fantin Quirini, a noble Venetian, bailiff of Lango, and great admiral of the order, held the island of Nizzaro of it by way of fief, and was obliged to take the care of defending those two isles. The sultan apprehending, that if he should make his attack on that side, Quirini's relations, who had a strong interest in the senate, might prevail with the republic to send troops to the assistance of the order, notified to him, that out of regard to his nation, with which he had always lived in good correspondence, he would readily agree to a treaty of neutrality for the islands which were under his government. Quirini communicated these propositions to the grand master and council of the order; some fed themselves with hopes that this private treaty might be improved to a more general one, and perhaps to the re-establishment of peace: but the most skilful were of a different opinion, judging that the sole motive of the sultan's offering this neutrality, was only to prevent a rupture with the Venetians, who alone enjoyed the commerce of Alexandria, and with a supposition, that if he could once make himself master of Rhodes, the neighbouring isles, which depended on it, would follow the fate of the capital, and fall of course into his hands. However, as the order would, by this treaty, be discharged from the care and ex-

pence

pence of maintaining troops in those two islands, they told the bailiff that he might conclude it, provided it was drawn up in terms suitable to the sovereignty of the order.

THE sultan, from a motive that was very near of the same nature with that above-mentioned, agreed with the king of Cyprus on a like neutrality, for the vessels of Rhodes and Egypt that should put into the ports of his kingdom. Yet in the midst of these preliminary treaties, which seemed to usher in a peace, or at least a long truce, a considerable fleet of the sultan's was again seen off of the isle of Rhodes, which landed eighteen thousand foot in that place, August. besides a strong body of horse and Mama-lukes, in which the principal strength of the Egyptians consisted. These barbarians, without sitting down before any other place in the island, marched directly to the capital, which they besieged at the same time that their fleet lay off at sea, in order to block up the port, and prevent the throwing in of succours. 1444.

THE reader may justly expect to meet in this place with an exact relation of this siege, with the particulars of the sallies made by the knights, the stormings which they opposed, and the killed and wounded on both sides ; but these knights knew much better how to handle their swords than their pens. The little learning at that time in the order, and indeed in that age, has deprived us of so curious and so important a relation : all that is to be found in the registers of the chancery, is, that the siege lasted forty days ; that the infidels battered down the place with a great train of artillery ; that there were several assaults given, in which they were always repulsed ; and that their general, having lost the best part of his troops, re-imbarked with the remainder, and was the first that carried to his master the news of the ill success of his arms..

THE grand master wisely judging that it would not be long before the infidel would make him another visit under the walls of Rhodes, dispatched William de

de Laistic his nephew into the west, to give the pope and most of the christian princes an account of the advantages lately gained by the order over the Saracens. He took this step in hopes of obtaining some succour : and that sovereigns, like other men, would declare themselves more freely for the victorious party. In fact, as soon as they heard in Europe that the knights had drove the infidels out of their isle, abundance of the young nobility of Europe, particularly the gentlemen of the kingdoms of France and Spain, fond of sharing in the glory of the order, were very eager to be admitted into it. This was a very seasonable recruit, and helped to fill up the forces of the order, which had been much diminished by losses which are inseparable from war. But this, at the same time, was an additional expence to the convent ; and in order to make a provision for it, the grand master called a general chapter at Rhodes, which was to assemble July 25th.

WHILST this assembly was sitting, the grand master received an account from the seneschal his nephew, that he had gone through most of the courts of Europe, but found the princes so exasperated against one another, and so universally engaged in war, that there were no hopes of any great succour. The grand master and the chapter saw plainly by these letters, that they must rely upon their own strength entirely ; whereupon, by common consent, they encreased the responsions for five years. By the same statute, the priors were forbid to receive a greater number of knights than the order could maintain ; and they agreed that the grand master should be empowered to put an end to this destructive war, by a peace, if they made him any overtures of it. The treaty was carried on the year following by the agency of James Cœur, a French merchant, who was afterwards treasurer to Charles VII. king of France. He was a citizen of the town of Bourges, a man of *petite génération*^a, as an histo-

* Histoire de Charles VII. Roy de France, par Mat. de Coucy, p. 691. edit. de Louvre.

historian of the time expresses it, to shew that he was born of parents who were not noble. But the defect of birth, if it really be a defect, was abundantly repaired by the greatness of his genius, by his industry and his application. France never gave birth to a merchant who extended its commerce so far, and made such prodigious profits : he had whole fleets at his command, and above three hundred factors dispersed in several countries of Europe and Asia, and even as far as *Sarrafiname*, as the author abovementioned expresses it. 'Twas one of these factors, who, in virtue of the safe-conducts which he had for his commerce, conducted the agent of the order to Alexandria on board his master's gallies. A peace was made, but all that we know of the conditions of the treaty is, that the envoy of Rhodes, after it was concluded, brought back with him into the island a great number of christian slaves and prisoners that had been taken during the war. A bull of the grand master's, bearing date Feb. 8. 1446. is still preserved in the treasury of the order, in which he orders brother Raimond d'Arpajon grand prior of St. Giles, and the receiver of the language of Provence, to pay James Cœur what was due to him for this voyage.

THE grand master's joy in having procured so many poor Christians their liberty, was a little damped by the concern that some letters sent 1448. from pope Nicholas V. gave him. There were some commanders at Rome, and at the pontiff's court, who were uneasy at the responsions of their commandries being encreased ; they complained to the pope of it, as if it had been a tyrannical imposition, and as if the grand master and the chapter had exceeded the bounds set to their authority by the statutes. Nicholas V. being prejudiced against the grand master, and without examining whether there were any misrepresentation in these complaints, wrote about them in harsh terms to Lastic, sending him at the same time a collection of the statutes made in the last chapter, which he supposed had been transgressed, and which

he ordered him to observe for the future as the rule of his conduct.

THE grand master laid the pope's letters before the council, and made an answer in terms which indeed were very respectful ; but at the same time full of that resolution which truth and justice always inspire. He represented to that pontiff, that pope Eugenius IV. his predecessor, after having examined the accounts of the expence the order had been at in sustaining the siege of Rhodes, had approved the augmentation of the responsions, in order to pay off the debts it had been obliged to contract during the war ; that such as made their complaints on this article were unworthy to wear the habit, fellows, says he, that never saw Rhodes, or else made no stay there, and with a design only of getting rid of the regular discipline, or probably to keep out of the way of dangers that are usual in war, especially in a bloody siege ; that most of those religious, instead of residing so much as upon their commandries, which they were obliged to do, and exercising the duties of hospitality, had entirely devoted themselves to the court of Rome, where they passed away their lives in luxury and pleasure ; that he besought his holiness to send them back immediately to the convent, to live in the chief house of their order, and to learn from the example of their brother companions, the life a true knight of St. John ought to lead. As to the statutes which his holiness had sent to him, they agreed in council, after having exactly compared them with the originals, that it could be the work only of some forger of writings, who had inserted several articles that were never heard of before in the order, and which were invented only to encourage the spirit of appropriation and libertinism of those profligate knights.

THE indignation which the grand master discovered against those mutineers was the better founded, in that they lived under his government at Rhodes, in an exact observance of their rule and statutes ; that in the very heat of the armaments which were frequently making, the knights never neglected to keep a strict fast during

during Advent and Lent ; that they abstained from meat every Wednesday in the year ; and that in the refectory, and all other regular places, no body durst interrupt a silence, which in that place was observed as regularly as in a community of monks and hermits. The grand master's letter, drawn up in form of an apology, was signed by the whole council, and the pope seemed satisfied with it.

BUT several of the European commanders, who were supported by the protection of some cardinals, and had also powerful friends in the order, and in the very council, were not a jot more exact in paying their responsions : so that one would have thought that they would pretend to free themselves from their vow of obedience. The order, by their rebellion, fell insensibly into a kind of anarchy : several chapters, and various assemblies were held on this account, in which very wholesome regulations were made, but disobedience, power, credit and cabal, rendered them entirely ineffectual.

THE council seeing the authority of the government slighted, could not think of a more proper remedy, in order to put a stop to so great a disorder, than by putting the sovereign authority, and the entire disposition of the revenue into the hands of the grand master only. This was a sort of dictatorship, which is always dangerous in a republican state ; but they were so persuaded of the zeal of Lastic, of his sincere piety, and withal of his moderation, that they made no difficulty of entrusting him with an absolute authority. He excused himself at first from accepting it on account of his great age ; and for fear of breaking in upon the ancient constitution of the order, of which he was a zealous observer ; he could not be brought to comply with the pressing solicitations of his religious, but upon condition that this alteration in the government should last only for three years, after the expiration of which term, the supreme council should resume its ancient authority.

THE wisdom and resolution of his conduct soon justified the choice the order had made: By virtue of the regulations made in the last chapter, he threatened openly to deprive all those of their commandries, and even to degrade them from the order, who did not by a certain stated time pay in their responses. These menaces, from a sovereign and a superior, whom they knew incapable of being moved by any recommendation, intimidated the most rebellious. They all gave security for their obedience, till such time as they should meet with an opportunity of remitting money to Rhodes, all bowed and submitted before the authority of so worthy an head, armed with so just an authority.

BUT as funds in the beginning were wanting, in order to pay the debts, and provide for the indispensable necessities of the order, he took them up on the revenues appropriated to the mastership. The first use that he made of his new authority was to strip himself; and like a true father, sacrificed with pleasure the great revenues annexed to his dignity, for the maintenance of his children, and the subsistence of the troops which the order kept in the several islands which then composed its dominions. However, that they might not abuse his easiness, he commanded all such commanders as resided at Rhodes, and received the value of an hundred crowns of gold revenue from their commandries, not to receive any thing more out of the treasury of the order for their subsistence.

THIS regulation of domestic discipline was succeeded by more important concerns. As in the disorder that the revenue was in, they had reason to fear a rupture with the Turks, who were never very scrupulous in observing treaties, the grand master sent ambassadors to Amurath II. who was then upon the throne, to discover how that prince was disposed with respect to the order. We have seen, during the war which the sultan of Egypt was making in the isle of Rhodes, how Amurath, that he might take his measures according as events should happen, put off the grand master's proposal of renewing the antient treaties of peace. The new embas-

embassadors of the order found him more compliant at this juncture : that prince had enough to do to defend himself against a formidable league of christian princes, into which the king of Hungary, the famous John Huniades, vaivod of Transilvania, the Wallachians, Scander-beg king of Albania, and even Usum-Cassan king of Persia, had entered. But of all his enemies, none was so terrible to him as the king or prince of Albania.

ALBANIA, a province of Europe, is situated eastward of us along the gulph of Venice ; it has on the east Macedonia, of which it was formerly a part, Epirus on the south, and on the north Servia, and a corner of Dalmatia. Some high mountains divide it from Epirus, and other mountains, marshes, craggy rocks, and narrow passes make the country impassable to troops that are unacquainted with the ground. This advantageous situation, with the courage and ferocity of those mountaineers, made them terrible to their neighbours, especially to the Turks : Amurath undertook to subdue them. John Castriot, who reigned then in this country, defended himself for a long time with great courage ; but he was forced at last to yield to forces superior to those of his little state. Castriot, to save the poor remains of his fortune, entered into a treaty with the Turkish prince, and as a pledge of his subjection, was obliged to give him his three sons, Constantine, George and John, in hostage. Amurath, without any regard to the faith of this treaty, ordered them to be circumcised, and instructed in the Mahometan law ; and the father of these three unfortunate princes, hearing of their misfortune, died of grief. Amurath, under pretence of securing the principality to the children of the abovementioned Albanian prince, seized upon it, and put strong garrisons into all the places.

'Tis not known what became of the two eldest sons of John Castriot. Most historians accuse Amurath of poisoning them ; others say that he only put out their eyes, and incapacitated them from ever having any heirs. The like fate was designed for the third ; but

they say Amurath was so charmed with his agreeable mien, and a certain air of grandeur that discovered itself already in that young prince, that he exempted him from those punishments, and ordered him to be carefully brought up in the religion of Mahomet, and in all the exercises proper for a soldier.

As soon as he was able to bear arms, Amurath took him with him into the field ; and in his very first campaign, he performed actions of such surprising valour, that the grand seignior, by way of allusion to the name of a great king of Macedonia, would have him called Scander-beg, i. e. lord Alexander. All the succeeding part of his life corresponded with this favourable beginning : whether he was engaged in duels and single combats, which he undertook against adventurers who challenged him at the head of armies, or else in general battles, he always gained the honour of the day. He soon became the favourite of Amurath, and afterwards one of his generals ; but the remembrance of Albania, which the young prince considered as his inheritance, and a secret uneasiness to see himself engaged in a religion different from that of his father's, affected him more than all the sultan's favour, so that he was resolutely bent to recover his dominions at any rate, and return to his mother the church.

SCANDER-BEG being fixed in this design, took his time when Amurath's secretary was in the country. He came to him, drew him aside, and having forced him to draw up letters patent directed to the governour of Croia, the capital of Albania, by which he was ordered to deliver up the government of that place to Scander-beg, he immediately stabbed that minister, and slew all his train to a man, and advanced with all possible diligence to the gates of Croia. He was received into that capital of Albania with all the respect that was due to the orders he brought ; but in the night, letting in three hundred men, which he had caused to advance and post themselves privately near the gates of the city, he put the Turkish governor and all the garrison to the sword, and without losing time, hastened into all parts

parts of Albania, which he reduced into his power. Most of the christian princes his neighbours sent to congratulate him on his good success ; and the Venetians, who looked upon his dominions as a barrier to cover those of the republic, supplied him with considerable sums to levy troops.

There was no want of soldiers : the Albanians, a warlike people, offered themselves in crouds to take the field ; but out of this great number, which would have formed a considerable army, he chose only eight thousand foot and seven thousand horse. With this small body of troops, and the advantage of the mountains and narrow passes with which the country abounded, he beat four great armies of the Turks. The first commanded by Ali, the second by Feris-beg, and the two others by Mustapha Basha, Bassa or Pacha, as different authors write him. Amurath ascribing these great losses to a want of courage or capacity in his generals, fancied the war would go on more successfully under his own direction, and therefore resolved to command his troops in person : he marched at the head of a formidable army to attack Scander-beg, and indeed carried some places, but the taking of them cost him more soldiers than the loss of a battle would have done. He was attended in this expedition by young Mahomet his son, whose valour, courage and resolution, as much as his birth, had engaged him to take him in for his partner in the empire ; having a mind to shew his troops at one and the same time the capacity of an old captain, and the ardor and fire of a young conqueror.

In the second campaign, the two sultans prepared to form the siege of Croia, the capital of Albania ; but before they undertook it, that they might not be disturbed in the execution of their designs, they made a treaty of peace with the Venetians, in which it was expressly stipulated, that the republic should hold no correspondence with the prince of Albania. 'Twas from the same motive, and in order to secure himself against all apprehensions from the fleets of the order,

that

that Amurath renewed with the grand master the treaties of peace which he had made with his predecessor.

THE siege of Croia proved unhappy to the Turks : Amurath, after seeing part of his army destroyed by the sudden attacks of Scander-beg, who kept the field, was at last obliged to raise it. The prince of Albania pursued him in his retreat, and cut to pieces the best part of his rear. Amurath fretting at the ill success of the campaign, and worn out with the infirmities of old age, fell sick. He was carried to Adrianople, where he ended his days, after a lingering illness of five or six months. This sultan was regretted by his subjects, and even by the Christians, especially when they came to compare his reign and his conduct with that of his successor ; a young prince, and one of the greatest conquerors indeed that Europe and Asia ever saw, but at the same time of a cruel, perfidious, and bloody nature, and whose actions revived the hateful remembrance of the most inhuman tyrants.

THE necessary connection of his history with that which I write, and the bloody wars that he made up on the order of St. John, oblige me to give a more particular account of one of its greatest enemies. He was a young prince, hardly 21 years old, whom nature and fortune conspired, in conjunction with an extraordinary valour, to make the terror of the whole world. His ambition was still greater than his birth, and the empire to which he was born. He had very superior talents, immense views, an admirable genius for distributing on proper occasions the execution of his projects ; was always attentive, always present to events, and never lost sight of the dispositions and forces of his enemies : his thirst after glory and pleasures was insatiable, and he abandoned himself to those abominable sensualities which nature cannot think of without horror : he had no honour, no humanity, no religion ; and esteemed the alcoran as little as he did the gospel ; and according to his principles, there were
but

but two divinities that deserved to be worshipped by men, fortune and valour.

SUCH was Mahomet II. who affected the title of Al-Biuch, or Mahomet the Great, betimes ; a title which posterity has continued to him. He was worthy of it, if we judge of him only by his conquests ; but in monarchs there are virtues which ought to take place of valour, and a prince cannot be truly great without piety and justice ; virtues which Mahomet had no notion of, or at least thought the practice of them fit only for private men.

YET no sooner was the death of Amurath, and the advancement of Mahomet II. upon the Ottoman throne made public, but the ambassadors of the emperors of Constantinople and Trebizond, and most of the Grecian and eastern princes, crowded to the porte. The grand master sent brother Peter Zinot thither in the name of the order. All these ministers, after making the usual compliments upon these occasions, pressed for a confirmation of the old alliances made between the princes their masters and the Ottoman house. Mahomet, whether dazzled with the charms of absolute power, or that he had a mind to lull the ambassadors into a security, received them all with an affected satisfaction, and readily renewed the treaties which they desired to have confirmed. But as the conquest of Constantinople was the first aim of his ambition, he employed all the next year in making secretly the necessary preparations for so great an enterprize, and in securing all the avenues that led to that capital of the east, to prevent the throwing in of any succours that the Greek emperor might obtain, either on the land side, or by the way of Pontus Euxinus, or the Black Sea.

IN this view he caused a fort to be erected on the European side of the Bosphorus. The emperor Constantine, alarmed at this step, dispatched ambassadors to him, to complain of it as an infraction of the treaties of peace so lately renewed between them. Mahomet answered them at first with a seeming moderation, that

he

he had only raised that fort to oppose the incursions of the knights of Rhodes, who were as much enemies to the Greeks as to the Turks ; and to secure, as he said, the subjects of both empires against the inroads of the Latins. But the ambassadors offering to insist on the fidelity with which the order observed its treaties, Mahomet transported by the violence of his temper, ordered them to hold their tongue, and swore, “ That ‘‘ the first that should dare to speak a word to him ‘‘ more on that subject, he would cause him to be ‘‘ flay’d alive.”

AFTER this declaration, and without keeping measures, he ordered his troops to advance and invest the capital of the Greek empire ; and they began to form one of the most remarkable sieges mentioned in all the history of the lower empire.

THE sultan arrived in the camp on the second of April : they say, that there were at least 300,000 men in his army, without reckoning a large fleet consisting of 250 vessels of different bulk, which had 24,000 men on board. All the force that they could muster up in Constantinople to oppose such formidable forces, hardly amounted to 6000 Greeks under arms, and about 3000 men, consisting of foreign troops and volunteers, which may well appear surprizing, considering the greatness of the city, and the prodigious number of its inhabitants. But these were none of the old Greeks, so renowned in antiquity for their valour, and the love of their country ; all their genius was now turned entirely to commerce : Constantinople was scarce filled with any thing but merchants, without reckoning a large number of calogers and monks, most of them covetous wretches, who, rather than assist their sovereign, buried their money in private places. So that it is no great wonder, if Constantine, destitute of troops and succours, could not hold out long against the efforts of the infidels. Notwithstanding all the resistance of the besieged, the city was taken by storm the forty second day of the siege.

THE emperor chose rather to be killed in defending his religion and his crown, than to fall alive into the

the hands of the infidels. Perhaps there never was seen a more melancholy and moving spectacle than what passed at the taking of this city. Above forty thousand men were put to the sword ; and sixty thousand sold for slaves : nothing escaped the fury and avarice of the soldiery.

THE women detested the fruitfulness which had made them mothers, and lamented bitterly the fate of the young children which they carried in their arms. Here was a numberless multitude of young maidens to be seen, fearful, and faltering in their pace, who not knowing where to go, wandered about like poor strangers, in the very bosom of their country, and whilst they were in quest of their parents, fell into an abyss of misfortunes, and into the hands of barbarians, from whom they suffered a treatment more shocking than the most cruel executions. Their tears and cries, which reached the heavens, could not move the heart of the insolent vanquisher ; and the meanest of the Turks had an accomplished beauty for his prey, though often taken from him by another Turk, either stronger than himself, or of greater authority in the army. Most of these Barbarians set their prisoners to sale, but the men of quality, the princes and officers who were taken under arms, were executed by the sultan's orders ; nothing escaped his cruelty but the handsomest young persons of both sexes, whom he reserved for the abominations of his seraglio.

'Twas thus that a young Greek lady of noble birth, called Irene, hardly seventeen years old, fell into his hands. A basha had just made her his slave, but being struck with her exquisite beauty, thought her a present worthy of the sultan. The east had never before given birth to so enchanting a creature ; her charms were irresistible, and triumphed over the savage heart of Mahomet ; rough as he was, he was forced to yield ; he abandoned himself entirely to this new passion ; and in order to have fewer avocations from his amorous assiduities, he passed several days without permitting his ministers and the principal officers of his army to see him.

him. Irene followed him afterwards to Adrianople : 'twas here he fixed the residence of the young Greek. As for himself, on whatever side war might oblige him to go, he would often, in the midst of the most important expeditions, leave the conduct of them to his generals, and hurry away to return to Irene. It was not long before it was visible that war was no longer his reigning passion ; the soldiers who were enured to plunder, and used to find booty in following him, murmured at this change. These murmurs spread and became epidemical ; the officers as well as the soldiers complained of his effeminate life ; yet his wrath was so terrible, that no body durst undertake to speak to him on that subject. At last, as the discontents of the soldiery were just going to break out, Mustapha basha, having regard only to the fidelity which he owed his master, was the first that gave him notice of the discourses which the janizaries held publicly to the prejudice of his glory.

THE sultan continued for some time in a sullen and deep silence, as if he was considering in himself what resolution he should take ; the only answer he gave him, and under pretence of a review, he ordered Mustapha to summon the basha's to assemble the next day, with all his guards, and the troops that were posted about the city ; after which he went into the apartment of Irene, and stayed with her till the next day.

NEVER did that young princess appear so charming in his eyes ; never too had the prince given her such tender marks of his love before : and in order, if possible, to bestow a new lustre on her beauty, he desired her women to exert all their art and skill in dressing her. When she was thus set out and adjusted to appear in public, he took her by the hand, and led her into the middle of the assembly, when throwing aside the veil which covered her face, he demanded haughtily of the basha's that stood round him, if they had ever seen a more finished beauty ? All the officers like good courtiers, were lavish of their praises,

and

and congratulated him on his happiness. Upon which, Mahomet taking the fair Greek by the hair with one hand, and drawing his scymitar with the other, he cut off her head at one stroke, and turning himself about to the grandees of the court, “ This sword, says he to “ them, with a wild and furious air, can, when I “ please, cut asunder the bonds of love.”

THE whole assembly was seized with horror, and shuddered at the sight : the dread they were all seized with, of being treated in the like manner, made the most mutinous of them tremble : every one thought he saw the fatal scymetar lifted over his own head ; but if they escaped his blood-thirsty temper at that moment, it was only to execute his vengeance the better. Mustapha, as a reward of his faithful advice, was first sacrificed, and that on a slight pretence ; he caused him to be strangled in the seraglio ; and in the long wars in which he was afterwards engaged, and which lasted as long as his reign, he had the cruel pleasure of dispatching most of the janizaries one after another, who, by their seditious cries, had interrupted his pleasures, and awaked his fury.

THIS prince had scarce been above six months in possession of Constantinople, when, imagining that all the princes of Asia ought to submit to his power, he began with the knights of Rhodes ; his demands upon them sufficiently declaring his pretensions. He sent an ambassador, or rather an herald, to the grand master, summoning him to own him for his sovereign, and send into his treasury an yearly tribute of 2000 ducats. Upon his refusal, the ambassador had orders to denounce war against him, and declare that the sultan his master was resolved in person to fall upon all the isles of the order with his invincible forces.

THE grand master, after advising with the council, answered him, that his order was composed of a body of military religious, who, as such, depended by their profession on the sovereign pontiff of the Christians ; that their ancestors had, by their valour, and at the expense of their blood, since made a conquest of Rhodes

and the neighbouring islands, the sovereignty of which no prince as yet had disputed with them ; that at the time of his election to the grand mastership, this sovereignty was put as it were in trust into his hands ; that he was accountable for it to his brothers and their successors, and that he would sacrifice his life with pleasure rather than do the least thing to prejudice the independency and liberty of the order.

THIS wise grand master and his council not doubting but so resolute an answer would soon be attended by the sultan's invasion of their territories, applied to the princes of Christendom, though they took this step rather with a view of having nothing wherewith they might reproach themselves, than out of any hopes of a speedy and effectual succour. The commander d'Aubusson, of the language of Auvergne, and descended from one of the most noble and ancient houses of la Marche, was appointed ambassador to Charles VII. who was then upon the throne of France. The grand master knowing his zeal for the order, made choice of him for that commission, and it proved the last action of his mastership. He died in a very old age, after having governed Rhodes in difficult and tempestuous times with equal prudence and resolution.

A

DISCOURSE
UPON THE
ALCORAN,
DELIVERED IN THE
ACADEMY of INSCRIPTIONS,

At the opening of it, on *Tuesday the 14th of November*
1724, by M. DE VERTOT.

OF all the sciences in which mankind employ their time, there is not any one more agreeable, or more useful than the knowledge of history. What satisfaction must it be to a reader to behold the succession of all ages; the revolutions of the greatest empires, legislators and conquerors; the authors of different religions, another kind of conquerors; in a word, all those famous men, who, by their valour, or learning and talents, seemed to have undertaken to change the whole face of the universe, passing along before his eyes, and as it were on a great theatre?

BUT time, in spite of all their manifesto's, of all the colours which those vain and ambitious men, or their partisans have employed to disguise their projects, has nevertheless taken off the varnish, and discovered truth in all its native simplicity: History, free from the prejudices of party, penetrates into the most secret motives: we there see, that an unjust desire of usurpation in some; an excessive thirst after riches or pleasures in others; sometimes a passion rooted in vanity in the

learned, and the hopes of making their names famous in the world, have, generally speaking, been the secret springs that have given motion to all their undertakings ; and 'tis from the generality of these great examples, which serve instead of an anticipated experience, that we may learn, that all unjust enterprizes, though never so successful, and that all upstart and erroneous opinions, become at last the contempt of all succeeding ages, and that truth alone deserves to be celebrated in all countries, and by all historians.

HOWEVER, before we pin our faith entirely on the credit of these writers, it is very fit that we examine their works by the rules of sound criticism, a kind of torch, which, like a faithful guide, conducts us through all the obscure and gloomy paths of antiquity, and helps us to distinguish truth from falsehood, the noble simplicity of history from the marvellous which we meet with in fiction, and all those vain ornaments with which illusion and error are deck'd.

IN order, therefore, to be assured of the truth of facts related by historians, especially in the most ancient, we must carefully examine the text of their works, to see if it has not suffered by interpolations, the different readings of manuscripts, the uniformity or difference of the style, the country in which an author was born, the age in which he lived, and the order which he has observed in chronology. 'Tis well known, that the changing of a date, and placing it either earlier or later, is enough to alter the very nature of facts, or at least the consequences that may be drawn from them : In a word, we ought to inform ourselves of the name, the religion, and morals of a writer. And though he should be anonymous, or appear under a fictitious name, yet the generality of these authors discover themselves in their works, and some strokes always drop from their pen, that lay them open, and represent their characters more faithfully than all the criticisms and apologies that have been written either for or against their works, could have done.

'Tis

'TIS by the assistance of these various rules of criticism, that I propose to examine who is the real author of the Alcoran; the motives which might probably have determined him to publish it; whether it were the effect of inspiration, or the work of a single person assisted by several learned men; in short, the different fate this book has met with, and whether it has not in the succession of ages undergone several variations, and changed its principles and maxims more than once.

THERE are three different opinions, with regard to the author of the Alcoran: Mahomet and his followers ascribe it to God alone; some christian writers are for fathering it upon the prince of darkness, transformed into an angel of light, and assuming the name of Gabriel; others pretend, that this book, which is made up of different passages of the Old and New testament, was compiled by Mahomet, with the assistance of a Rabbin, and several Christians of different sects: This is the opinion which I am to examine.

THE first syllable of the word Alcoran is only an article^a, and we may as well say, The Coran, an Arabic word, which signifies Reading or Writing^b. There is no one but knows, that it is a book which contains the religion of the Musulmen, and that it is held in the same veneration with them as the Holy Scriptures with Christians. The Turks likeways give this book the title of El Forcan, i. e. which distinguishes good from evil; 'tis a feigned conference which Mahomet had with God and the angels, from whom he pretends to have received his law. Ali, Mahomet's cousin-german, and son-in-law, in order to enhance the merit of this divine book, gave out, that the faithful found therein the history of former ages, laws for the conduct of this life, and infallible predictions with regard to futurity. Their preachers take it into the pulpits with them; they hold it open, and read every now and then out of it some verse by way of text. Their positive and school divinity is founded only on some passa-

^a See Maracci, page 33.

^b The book to be read, or the legend. Prideaux.

ges of the Alcoran, which supplies them likeways with prayers, and their priests read a chapter out of it every day in their mosques.

THIS wonderful book did not appear in the world till about the beginning of the seventh century. But such as believe in it, maintain, from the ninety-seventh chapter of that work, that it is as old as the creation of the world ; that the original of this book was once a part of the great book of the eternal decrees ; that it was deposited in the heaven of the moon, and that it was brought from thence at the time appointed by providence, by the angel Gabriel to Mahomet, who could neither write nor read^a.

ONE would readily believe, that it would have been scarce possible to have carried fiction to a greater length. Nevertheless, some divines, called Sonnites, whom the infidels look upon as the only orthodox, have improv'd this fabulous original with new idle fancies, and maintained publickly, that the Alcoran was increased, eternal, and made part of the divine essence, *Si quis dixerit Alcoranum esse creatum, est infidelis^b*, as the Latin translator of the Arabick Algazel has rendered it. But this opinion was afterwards attacked under the reigns of the Abassidian Caliphs, by other Musul-men divines, called Mortazales, who, in answer to this anathema, pronounced another drawn up almost in the same terms, *infidelis est qui dicit Alcoranum esse æternum seu increatum*. This dispute gave rise to a great schism, and was the occasion of civil wars, in which great numbers of both parties lost their lives.

THE only point in which they agreed, was, that this book, whether created or eternal, as it descended from the throne of God, and was filled with his spirit, it merited the respect and veneration of all men. And we actually see to this day an advertisement prefixed to most of the copies of it, in these words, Let none but the

^a *Laus Deo, ait Mahmud, filius Omar, qui demisit è cælo Alcoranum.* Maracci, p. 34.

^b *Algazel in professione fidei Mahumeticae profitetur Alcoranum esse æternum, substantem essentiâ Dei.* Vide Maracci p. 44.

the pure presume to touch this book, for it is a present come down from heaven, and sent from the king of ages : *ne attingant eum nisi purificati.*

'Tis plain from hence, that men, in the opinion of the Mahometans, are expressly excluded from having been the authors of this new law. Mahomet, depending upon the excellency of the work, gave out, that neither devils nor men, though they should unite all their talents, would be able to compose any thing that could come near the perfection of the Alcoran : *Sismul congregarentur homines et daemones, ut facerent aliquid simile huic Alcorano, nunquam id efficere posseint, etiam si mutuo se se ad hoc adjuvarent.* Sura 17.

THE generality of christian writers, on the contrary, pretend, that the devil is the real author of Mahometanism, and that he only made use of Mahomet, as an instrument, to found a false religion upon the ruins of Christianity. 'Twas the devil, if they are to be believed, who appeared to Mahomet under the name and shape of the angel Gabriel, or, if you please, under the shape of a pigeon, which Mahomet had taught to peck in his ear ; a proof that this false prophet was an impostor, who only made use of religion as a means to aggrandize himself. His design was to unite all the various religions of Arabia into one body, and to make so many subjects of his proselytes. There were in his time three religions in Arabia, viz. Idolaters, Jews and Christians ; and the last were divided into Catholics and Schismatics. Christianity had been established in Arabia Felix ever since the emperor Justinus, and this church was subordinate to the jurisdiction of the patriarch of Alexandria, as well as that of the Abyssines.

ARABIA PETRAEA, from Palestine to the gulph of Ayla, and all the rest of the coast, as far as the borders of Egypt, was subject to the Roman empire, as was also Arabia Deserta, or at least that part of it which is adjoining to Syria and Palestine, whereof Bostra was at that time the metropolis. 'Tis pretended, that the emperor Philip was born in that city, which anciently

was

was no more than a castle built by some Arabian prince. The emperor Severus made it a city, and settled a colony there : A council was held at Bostra, on occasion of Bercellus its bishop's being infected with the heresy of those who denied the incarnation of the Word. This was about A. D. 249.

Most of the inhabitants of the three Arabias were idolaters, and pretended to be all descended from Kedar, son of Ishmael. The learned Levinus Warnerus, in his treatise of the manners of the Arabians, before Mahometanism prevailed in their country, asserts, that the Korisians or Korashites, the most noble tribe of that great peninsula, had preserved themselves from idolatry ; that they had constantly used circumcision ever since Ishmael's time ; that they were frequent in prayer, were very bountiful in their alms, and that the most devout among them never drank wine. The city of Mecca, with regard to religion, was considered as the metropolis of the pagan Arabians. Shoals of pilgrims came thither from all the provinces, to visit an old temple called the Caaba, which, according to a received tradition, they believed to be built by Abraham. They undertook these pious pilgrimages in commemoration of that patriarch's journeys, and sacrificed the first-born of a camel upon the neighbouring mountains of Mecca. This perhaps might have been the most essential part of their worship, and they had at best but a very confused notion of the God of Abraham. There is in the wall of Caaba a black stone, which the Mahometans tell us, was brought milk white from heaven by the angel Gabriel at the beginning of the world, but that it has been since blackened by the sins of men. The Turks in their pilgrimages pay a very superstitious veneration to this mysterious stone. But we must not fancy that Mahomet invented these ceremonies ; they had been used so long before his time among the Arabians, that it would have been impossible for that impostor ever to have rooted out this piece of superstition from among them, though he should have formed a design of doing it.

THE idolatrous Arabians acknowledged indeed a first being, the only and sovereign creator of all things; but then they made him, as it were, a supine deity without providence; and in their necessities they addressed themselves to some subaltern genii, and to a kind of goddesses: Such were Allath, Menach and Aluzza, whom these modern Ishmaelites adored as the daughters of the great God.

SOME Arabians^a, who were subjects of Persia, followed the religion of that country, and worshipped the fire. There were likeways other kinds of idolaters called Sabians, (which we must take care not to confound with the ancient Sabéans) and these adored certain genii, which they placed in the planets and stars. The worship of some went no farther than the stars which they adored; and others, who were still more stupid, directed all their devotion to certain images which represented the several attributes of those stars: and the Caaba, or great temple, was by degrees crowded with a multitude of idols, of which Mahomet afterwards cleared it.

As for the Jews, after the emperors Titus and Adrian had drove them out of Jerusalem, a great number of that miserable people had taken refuge in Arabia, a country that is contiguous to Palestine, where they multiplied considerably; but the generality of them paid greater deference to the ridiculous fancies of their rabbins and talmudists, than to the law of Moses, and the sacred text of the bible.

THE christian Arabs followed the Greek rite, of whom very few were Catholicks, the greatest part of them having turned Eutychians or Jacobites; nor were there wanting among them some ancient sectaries of the doctrine of Ebion and Cerinthus, two arch-heretics who lived in the first century of the church, and were cotemporaries with the apostle St. John.

THERE were likeways some Arians, some Nestorians and Cophti, a sort of Eutychians: but exclusive of the exterior worship of those different religions, a corruption

* Pocokii Specim. Arabic. p. 53.

ruption that was almost universal, and an ignorance equal to it, prevailed among the Arabians of all denominations, and the Jew was scarcely to be distinguished from the Christian by any other mark but circumcision and baptism.

IF we enquire into the civil government of Arabia, we shall find, that besides certain countries, which held either under the Greek empire, or that of Persia, Arabia had formerly enjoyed its particular sovereigns. Po-cock, in his notes upon Abul-Faragius, an Arabian author, and of the sect of the Jacobites, has given us the names of these princes, but neither tells us the seat of their dominion, nor how long they reigned. And in the seventh century, in Mahomet's time, we meet with no other sovereigns in Arabia Petræa, either in Mecca, or Medina, the two principal cities of that province, but the chiefs of each tribe, who were at the same time the generals and magistrates of those little republicks.

THIS multitude of chiefs, all independent on one another, and the great diversity in worship and religion, made Mahomet think it a favourable juncture for putting his designs in execution. The character that Elmacin hath drawn of him, may be seen in the beginning of this work^a, but his conduct will paint it still better. He was a man who thirsted after empire, and was greedy of pleasures; of a superior genius; and who, either by his education or reflexion, saw through all the ridiculous foppery of that multitude of deities which the people had set up. Had he not been vain enough to pretend his holding an intimate correspondence with God, by the ministry of the angel Gabriel, the magistrates had never driven him out of Mecca: but as he was for acting an extraordinary part, and had neither a mission nor miracles to authorize it, he was at last obliged to supply the force he wanted in argument by that of arms, to establish his system sword in hand, and to found it on a revelation, of which he himself was the minister and the herald.

IN

^a Page 6. vol. I.

IN order therefore to succeed in his scheme*, he associated with himself a learned Jew, born in Persia, a rabbin in his sect, whom Elmacin calls by the name of Salman. But the greatest assistance he received was from a Nestorian monk, called by the western historians Sergius, and by the eastern Bahira, an apostate, who had been expelled his monastery for his disorderly life. Such were the architects whom Mahomet employed for erecting the new system he projected. The Jew furnished him with various histories from the Old Testament, blended with the chimeras and dreams of the Talmud; which Mahomet, in order to heighten the marvellous, pieced out with some fabulous circumstances of his own invention, which are still to be seen in the Alcoran. The Nestorian monk, at the same time, brought him acquainted with the new testament, and the discipline of the church: All this he changed and corrupted with fables, which he borrowed from pseudo-gospels and apocryphal books; and 'tis manifest from the Alcoran, that he was not unacquainted with the history of the infancy of Jesus, and the family of the virgin Mary.

BUT whatever were the names of those Jews and Christians who assisted Mahomet in the forging of his Alcoran, 'tis certain, that as this book contains so many particularities of the Old and New Testament, Mahomet, who was born and bred a Pagan, and had lived in idolatry till he was forty years old, and who, moreover, was so illiterate, that he could neither write nor read, must necessarily have been directed in the composition of the Alcoran, by some Jew and by some Christian, both of them learned in their religion, and who, upon the plan which he had formed, supplied him with that infinite number of historical facts and passages which are scattered up and down that work.

BEING soon after supported by some disciples, he no longer makes a secret of his doctrine, but sets up publickly for a preacher; he tenders the Alcoran to the people

* Abdias Bensalon. Cantat. Orat. 1. contra Mahometam. tract.
Fr. Ric. c. 6 & 13. Theoph. Zonaras fortalitium fidei. l. 4.

people as a divine book, which had been brought him from heaven ; and though he was wholly illiterate, as was before observed, he yet recommends himself, and is followed for the purity of his language, for the turn and loftiness of his expressions, and for the care he took to imitate in the Alcoran, sometimes the sublime style of the beginning of Genesis, and sometimes the *pathos* of the prophets of the Old Testament.

IF Moses relates that God said, Let there be light, and there was light ; let the earth be made, and the earth was made ; Expressions which a heathen philosopher, Longinus by name, had proposed as a model of the sublime, and which give so fine a description of the power of the creator, and the obedience of the creature ; Mahomet, in imitation of the Jewish legislator, speaking, in the chapter Houd, of the asswaging of the waters, makes God say, Earth, swallow up the waters ; heaven, take back those which thou hast showered down. The waters immediately drew back, continues the false prophet ; the command of God was fulfilled, the ark rested upon the mountain, and a voice was heard from heaven, saying, Wo to the wicked. Such as understand Arabick, agree, that Mahomet, as to expression, does not fall very short of the beauty of the original which he endeavoured to imitate, and that his phrases in particular are well chosen, and happily disposed. Prideaux owns, that the Alcoran, with respect to the style and purity of the language, is the most perfect model of any we have of the elegance of the Arabick tongue. That false prophet was particularly conspicuous for brightness of thought, and particularly for drawing lively representations and descriptions of the rewards and punishments of the next life. Of all the various motives that have an influence on the mind of man, he scarce made use of any but hope and fear.

WHEN he treated of paradise², as he had to do with people who were scorch'd with the burning rays of the sun, and dwelt under the torrid zone, he represented that place of felicity, as a garden watered with fountains

² Alc. c. 3, 4, 36, 37, 43, 47, 78.

tains and cooling liquors, and planted with trees that were ever green, and which bore delicious fruits in every season. And for the satisfaction of sensual and voluptuous men, in a country, where, as Ammianus Marcellinus relates, 'tis incredible to think with what greediness both men and women abandon themselves to lust^a, *Incredibile est quo ardore apud eos in venerem uterque solvitur sexus*: Mahomet, to draw them in, promises the men, that the kernels of the fruit, they were to eat in paradise should be metamorphosed into so many young girls divinely beautiful, and created on purpose for their felicity; and withal so gentle, so complaisant, and so sweet, that if but a drop of their spittle was to fall into the sea, that alone would be sufficient to take away all its bitterness; and notwithstanding that they were to repeat frequently the duties of the marriage bed, they yet should remain ever virgins, without being ever mothers.

If this doctrine flattered sensual men^b, some old women, on the contrary, fancying their age excluded them from this place of pleasure, were very much alarmed at it. One of them, as Lamay tells us, in his Lathaif, complained to the prophet about it, who told her for her comfort, that they would all rise again at the blooming age of fifteen, and in all the perfection of beauty; this was calculated for the satisfaction of the old and ugly, and accordingly did not fail to please.

MAHOMET, as a contrast to paradise, represents hell as a burning furnace, eternally covered and surrounded with thick clouds, and an hot saltish smoke^c. As for coolness, he makes the damned swallow a blackish ever-burning liquor, like melted pitch, which was to circulate in their veins; and he allows these unhappy wretches no shade but from a certain tree which he calls Zacoum, the fruits of which, he told them, resemble the heads of devils. We may easily perceive, notwithstanding their being so clouded with fictions, that the fountains and streams of Mahomet's paradise

^a Alc. I. 14. c. 4.^b Hotting. hist. orient. I. 2. c. 4.^c Alc. c. 7, 37, 43, 44, 47, 50, 74, 77, 78, 90.

are borrowed from these words of scripture, “ The elect shall drink of pleasures as out of a river,” *de torrente voluptatis potabis eos* : and as to the young people who were to administer to their pleasures, all those circumstances were formed upon the plan of the terrestrial paradise which Cerinthus had drawn ; who maintained, that after the general resurrection, Jesus Christ should reign on earth at Jerusalem in Palestine ; that men should then have a full enjoyment of all the pleasures of which they should have deprived themselves during their lifetime, and that their wedding day should last a thousand years.

If we consult the bare text of the Alcoran, and take it in a literal sense, nothing can possibly be more gross than these promises, which tend only to the gratification of the senses. And indeed Mahomet perceiving, that this kind of felicity would not satisfy men of understanding, he, in order to please them, as well as the rest, adds, in the chapter entitled Jonas, that in these delightful gardens, the blessed should be incessantly repeating these words, “ Thou art holy, O Lord our God, and eternal ; praise be to the Lord of all creatures.” And the Scheic Alalem cries out, “ Paradise, O Lord, is desirable only because it gives us a sight of thee ; for without the splendor of thy beauty, it would be irksome to us :” which affords room to imagine, that these different descriptions of the sensual pleasures and corporeal pains of another life, were but so many allegories with which Mahomet heightened his discourses ; a figure very frequently used by the easterns, and which upon that account, is not always to be taken in a literal sense, according to some doctors of that sect, who made a witty and devout Musulman say, “ O thou who invitest me to enjoy the delights of paradise, 'tis not paradise that I seek, but only the face of him who created paradise.”

WHATEVER care Mahomet might take to adapt the plan of his paradise to the different tastes of mankind, an undertaking of no little difficulty : and, moreover, as he was sensible, that every thing relating to religion, which

which bears the character of novelty, is justly suspected, he declares in the Alcoran, that he does not so much pretend to preach a new law, as to revive that which God had given to Adam and the first men, and which was afterwards transmittted to Noah and his descendants, down to Abraham and Ishmael their ancestors : a law, says he, more antient than either that of the Jews, or of the Christians. He adds, that this law, notwithstanding its being drawn up by a divine hand, had been changed and corrupted by the successors of patriarchs, who had banished the worship of the true God, and introduced in its stead that of images and idols, which they made the object of their religion ; that God, in order to bring mankind back into the paths of truth, had at first sent them a great prophet called Moses, who had given them a new law in his name, and authorised his mission by the most illustrious miracles ; but that the people of Israel, to whom he was sent, had, in process of time, preferred human traditions before this holy law, and that that nation had relapsed several times into idolatry.

THAT the sovereign creator of mankind had, at the time fixed by his eternal decrees, raised up a second prophet greater than Moses, called JESUS, the son of Mary, conceived, as he said, by the breath of God, without a father, in the same manner as Adam, and born of a mother who had always been a virgin : But notwithstanding this new prophet published a law that breathed nothing but goodness and charity, and had wrought surprising miracles in the face of all Judea, in order to make it be received ; nevertheless, his mission, in spite of all his miracles, had had no better success than that of Moses : that the priests and pharisees had determined to put him to death, but that God, in the moment of his passion and execution, had snatched him from the fury of his enemies, and taken him up into heaven ; another fable, which he had borrowed partly from the notions of Cerinthus, Mahomet adds, that the Christians, after his ascension, had adulterated his law to such a degree, that it was destroyed in a

manner by false interpretations, and was no longer genuine. That, in fine, God had sent him as his last prophet, and greater than either Moses or Jesus, to purge religion of all the fables which men had introduced into it under the notion of traditions and mysteries, and to unite them all in the same belief, and in the observance of the same law ; of which, he said, he was no more than a minister, and the bearer of the orders of heaven.

'TWAS from these different principles that this artful impostor framed his system. The Jew had furnished him with that of the existence of one only God¹, but without a multiplication of persons : he forbids expressly in the Alcoran, the ascribing either son or daughters to God ; and by this prohibition, he excludes the three pretended goddesses of the idolatrous Arabs, and destroys at the same time the mystery of the trinity, and the merit of the passion of our Saviour Christ.

ONE would think he had taken the first principle of this unity of God from the words of Deuteronomy, where it is said, " Hear, O Israel, our God is one," the sense of which he has altered by these Arabick words, *la illach, illalach*, there is no other God but God ; and in order to recommend his own mission at the same time, he adds, in the same language, *ou Mahammed resoul*, and Mahomet is the messenger of God : Other words which are manifestly copied from those we read in St. John's gospel, " This is life eternal, to know thee " the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast " sent," *et quem misisti filium*. Mahomet, in order to draw in both Jews as well as Christians, borrowed facts and passages indifferently from the Old and New Testament.

'TWAS out of complaisance for his countrymen in general, and for the Arabian Jews in particular, that he retained

¹ Do you never consider that God is one, and has no posterity? --Blessed be God who has no other sons or daughters than those good souls who worship him, and keep his commandments. Alc. c. 37. towards the end.

retained the use of circumcision, tho' there is not any mention made of it in the Alcoran; but that rite had been established for several ages among the greatest part of the Arabians without distinction.

ORIGEN, who was at no great distance from Arabia, relates, that all the Ishmaelites who inhabit that country, get themselves circumcised when they come to be thirteen years old. St. Jerom^a confirms the same circumstance in his commentary upon Jeremiah. The greatest part, says he, of those people who inhabit round about Palestine, observe circumcision, but chiefly the Egyptians, the Edomites, the Ammonites, the Moabites, and all the country of the Saracens, who dwell in the deserts i. e. in the deserts of Arabia: Whence we may presume, that religion was not the only motive for the establishing of this custom.

NEVERTHELESS, it is probable enough, that Mahomet recommended circumcision and abstinence from swines flesh, and things strangled, merely out of complaisance to the Jews, whom he had a mind to bring over to his sect; but some doctors of his religion have since asserted, that the only reason of his taking in circumcision was in order to ensure a better observance of the precept of cleanliness, which forbids the letting any urine fall on that part of the skin, which for that reason they cut off.

As for the use of wine, Mahomet, in all probability forbid it only to heighten the perfection of his new law: perhaps too he was willing that his disciples should agree in that point with the Rechabites^b and Nazarites of the old law, who never drank any intoxicating liquors. Others pretend, that the sole motive of his prohibiting the use of wine, was in order to prevent those quarrels which frequently arise in the midst of good fellowship; not to mention, that in so hot a country as Arabia, water and cooling liquors were perhaps more agreeable than wine. But I very much question whether this article of Mahomet's law would have

^a Philocalia, c. 23. Hist. Eccles. p. 103. chap. 10.

^b Jerem. c. 35.

done him any service, had he begun his mission with the people of the north. "Abstain, says this lawgiver to his disciples, from wine, from playing at games of chance and chess: these are inventions of the devil, to sow hatred and division among them, to estrange them from prayer, and hinder them from calling upon the name of God."

FROM the Christians Mahomet borrowed the frequent use of prayer, which he fixed at five times every day, the practice of a Lent-fast, and the payment of the tithe of one's possessions; this, however, he ordered to be applied for the relief of the poor.

THOUGH he had severely condemned all manner of worship that was not immediately directed to the one only God, nevertheless, that he might not wholly alienate the affections of the people of Mecca, and in order to engage them by motives of self-interest, he made a particular precept, enjoining all such persons as had substance and strength sufficient for the journey, to go on a pilgrimage to the great temple of Mecca, after it should be cleared of idols: and he made this injunction, because the great resort of pilgrims brought great sums of money into a country whose soil was barren. He next allowed, in favour of the Heathens, of a mistaken kind of predestination, not unlike what the ancients called fate, and taught, that if the fatal moment of a man's death was not come, he would be as safe in the midst of a thousand naked swords pointed against him, as if he was alone in his own house and in bed: A principle which was afterwards of great advantage to his successors in their wars; and in spite of the fear which danger naturally inspires, we have frequently seen Mahometan soldiers rush cheerfully upon the swords of their enemies, from a notion that they had nothing to dread on such an occasion, if they were not predestinated to die in it. "'Tis impossible, says Mahomet in the chapter Amram, for a person to die at any other time than that which is fixed and determined by the immutable decrees of God."

THIS

THIS artful mixture of various religions, and in which every one fancied he discovered some traces of his first belief, imposed upon a great many people ; and the insidious impostor, in order to establish his errors, borrowed from both Jews and Christians some great truths, and in some instances the practice of great virtues.

As our divine Saviour has expressly recommended to us the doing good to those that persecute us, Mahomet, to imitate him, at the end of the chapter Aaraf expresses himself thus, "Do good to all ;" and the author of Keschef, one of his commentators, relates, that Mahomet, upon receiving this precept from the angel Gabriel, ask'd him the meaning of it, upon which the angel made him this comment : "Court him who drives you from him ; give to him who has taken from you ; pardon him who offends you ; for God will have you sow the seeds of the greatest virtues in your souls."

THE article wherein he chiefly differed from the purity of the Christian religion, was that of polygamy, and the plurality of wives ; but it was already established among the Jews and idolatrous Arabs ; so that he allowed his disciples to marry four lawful wives at the same time^a ; and as the legislator did not think himself obliged to submit to a law of his own making, he married at least fifteen, and, as other say, one and twenty wives. 'Twas his favourite passion, and he himself does not scruple to own it ; he declares^b, that he was not affected by any kind of pleasure, but that which arose from grateful odours, and the commerce of beautiful women. *Deus posuit delectationem meam in savibus odoribus et in mulieribus* ; as is related by the learned Maracci, confessor to pope Innocent II. the last and most exact translator of the Alcoran.

HOWEVER, notwithstanding all the complaisance Mahomet had for his own inclinations, and for those of his fellow citizens, he yet met with a strong opposition from the magistrates of Mecca, and the chief men of his tribe. 'Tis plain from the twenty-fifth chapter of

^a Alc. c. 4.

^b Page 31.

of the Alcoran^a, that they treated him publickly as an impostor, and that the generality of the Korashites declared aloud, that his book was no more than a texture of fables of his own invention, or forged by the help of other impostors; and in the sixteenth chapter he points out particularly the person who was suspected to be the author of it: "I know, says he, speaking of himself, 'twill be said, that a certain person has taught me the Alcoran; but he whom they pretend to be the secret author of it, is a Persian by birth, and speaks the language of Persia, whereas the Alcoran is written in Arabic, and is full of instruction and eloquence." The cunning impostor, that his performance might not be ascribed to another, employed only two foreigners to assist him in compiling it, the one a Greek, and the other a Persian, neither of whom scarce understood Arabic: moreover, 'tis pretended, that he, in order to get rid of a troublesome witness, afterwards got the first, who had had the greatest hand in it, to be privately dispatched.

WHAT troubled him most, was, that the most sensible part of the inhabitants of Mecca required him to shew some warrant for his new doctrine^b, and to authorise it by miracles, the most authentic credentials a prophet can have. Moses, said they, Jesus Christ, and other prophets, worked, by your own confession, the most glorious miracles to prove their mission; why then do not you, if you are a prophet, and greater than they, work the like?

MAHOMET, in order to get clear of so home an objection, turned and winded on all sides^c. One while he told them, that as miracles came from the almighty hand of God, men could not know the time when he had determined to work them; another while he reproached them, that though they should see miracles, they yet would not be converted; and at other times he

^a Alc. c. 15, 37, 81.

^b Theophanes Zonaras. Ricardi confutatio Mahom. c. 13. Cantacuzen. orat. 1. contra Mahomet.

^c Alc. c. 6.

he said that his mission extended no farther than to preach to them the word of God, such as he had received it from the angel Gabriel^a, and added, that there could not be a greater miracle than the Alcoran itself, which was so perfect in all its parts, that it could not possibly be the work of the most learned men, nor even of the devils themselves, much less could it have been composed by an illiterate man like himself, who could neither write nor read.

BUT the magistrates of Mecca would not take up with such idle reasons^b, in which the impostor was for having the point in question taken for granted, and moreover, suspecting that he had more ambitious designs in view, and that he had a mind to usurp the government of his country, they banished him as a seditious person, and forced him to leave Mecca.

MAHOMET now saw plainly, that he should never be able to execute his ambitious projects by persuasion only, and therefore resolved to have recourse to arms ; and to authorise this step, he did not fail, as usual, to call in heaven to his assistance. Immediately he gave out among his disciples^c, that the angel Gabriel had brought him a sword from almighty God, with orders to subdue by the force of arms all such as should refuse to embrace his doctrine.

HE began this religious war by plundering the caravans ; when booty, so grateful to the Arabs, soon brought great numbers of them under his standard : Being thus reinforced, he ravages the open country, surprizes castles, takes towns, and after having for some time practised the trade of robbery, he learned insensibly the art of conquering.

We need not search for any other reason to account for the surprising progress this sect made in so little time in Arabia ; which if Mahomet could but have foreseen, he would in all probability have spared himself the trouble of forging so many revelations, and fitting

^a Pocock. spec. hist. Arab. p. 191, 192. Alc. c. 9, 10, and 17. Alc. c. 7.

^b Elmacin, l. 1. c. 1.

^c Alc. c. 4.

ting together the various pieces he borrowed from the Jewish and Christian religions. 'Tis well known, that he, in less than eleven years time, made himself master of the greatest part of the three Arabias. The success of his arms exceeded his first projects, and fortune carried him to greater lengths than he had even dared to hope. But as his wars, his conquests, and those of his successors, are foreign to my subject, I shall only observe, that he united the priesthood to the empire ; that his disciples were his first subjects ; that he forced the rest by violence to submit to him ; that his arms were the foundation of his new religion, and that he in all probability might have taken them up only in order to establish it with greater dispatch. His successors made use of the same pretext to seize on Asia, Africa, and a part of Europe ; and whether would they not have extended their conquests, had not God raised up the intrepid courage of the knights of St. John of Jerusalem, to make head against them ? those knights, I say, who for several ages have served as a bulwark to all Christendom. The Arabians were the first people of Asia that embraced the religion of Mahomet ; some of these, out of fear of his power, others carried away and infected by example, many seduced by the lure of pleasures ; nor were there wanting others who were charmed with his eloquence, and certain pathetical expressions which dropped from him in his sermons, or in various places of the Alcoran.

WE there indeed meet with noble and lofty expressions upon the majesty, the power, and the goodness of God, as well as on the ingratitude of men ; but all his discourses on these subjects are without proofs, without coherence, order, or connection ; and one may easily perceive, that what they call the Alcoran, or the book by way of eminence, to speak after the Arabians, is no more than the work of a mere sophister and declaimer.

ONE cannot even say that this work is one continued discourse, and made at the same time ; for we there meet with several variations and alterations, according

as its author was actuated by new passions, or engaged by new interests. In the fourth chapter, any man is expressly forbid to marry the wife of another, during the lifetime of the latter; but unluckily Mahomet casts his eyes upon Zainab, the wife of Zaib, his freed man; he liked her, and in order to have her for himself, he bestowed extraordinary favours upon his late slave, that so he might engage him to divorce her, which being done, he immediately marries her. This scandalous compact between the master and his servant, highly offended the greatest part of his followers; but to silence their complaints, notwithstanding it contradicts the law which he himself had preached, he publishes an addition to the thirty-third chapter of the Alcoran, wherein God declares, that he had married Zainab to Mahomet; a declaration which put that woman, who was not a little proud of the revelation, upon insulting the rest of the prophet's wives, and upon claiming a precedence, by virtue of her having been married by an express order from heaven, whereas none but men had been concerned in the marriages of her rivals.

THIS false prophet, besides all those wives, who composed his seraglio, had likeways in his family a young female slave of exquisite beauty, of about fifteen years of age, called Mary, an Egyptian by birth, and a Christian. We are told, that the governor of Egypt had made a present of her to Mahomet. Immediately our prophet falls in love with her, and is caught by two of his wives in a criminal commerce with her. These do not fail to make a great stir about it, but as it might prejudice his reputation, heaven comes in immediately to his assistance, and by a new revelation, which we find in the sixty-sixth chapter, God allows Mahomet, and all Musulmen whatever, to cohabit with their slaves, in spite of their wives². "O prophet, for thus Mahomet makes God say, why dost thou, for fear of disobliging thy wives, deny thyself the pleasure which God has granted thee?" The impious wretch begins with committing the crime, and then

var-

² Alc. c. 66. of Prohibition.

warrants it by a pretended dispensation from heaven. The only reason of my selecting these two examples from a great number of others, was to shew, that there are in the Alcoran, in that very book which the Mahometans tell us came down from the throne of God, several opposite and contradictory articles, and which are computed to amount to near one hundred and fifty. The Mahometans endeavour to evade this objection, by saying, that God having thought proper to abrogate certain articles, was afterwards pleased to substitute others in their stead ; but we may observe, that both these passages are not only preserved in the text, but that that article which is substituted is often placed before the other which was to be disannulled ; which occasions a strange confusion, unless they, in order to account for this transposition, should tell us, that that was owing to the Alcoran's having been written upon loose leaves, which antiently were never stiched together in order, but rolled upon one another, which for that reason, might occasion the transposition of several chapters.

AFTER Mahomet's death, Abu-Beker his father-in-law and successor, collected these loose leaves together, put them into what he thought a proper order ; and after consulting such of Mahomet's disciples as had attended with greatest assiduity upon his discourses, he made a collection of them, which he afterwards left in the custody of Haphsa, daughter to Omar, and one of the surviving wives of that prophet.

YET notwithstanding this precaution, several copies of this book were spread up and down the provinces, very different from one another. The people of Hyerak-Arasy, which is the antient Chaldæa, together with the Syrians, maintained, that their copies, though contradictory to one another in several passages, were nevertheless the only authentic ones. These disputes obliged the caliph Othman, the third successor to Mahomet, to consult the original of Abu-Beker, if we may give that name to a book which he himself had composed, and in which he had added and razed

what-

whatever he thought proper, and this upon the information of persons, who boasted their having retained, by strength of memory, most of the passages of the Alcoran from Mahomet's discourses. Othman, however, caused several copies to be made of it, and distributed them up and down the Mahometan provinces, and ordered all the other copies which fell into his hands to be burnt as spurious.

AND yet, notwithstanding that the Alcoran was revised in this manner, and though it has passed through so many hands, in order to its being corrected, there were nevertheless whole nations who could not be prevailed with to receive some surats or chapters in it as canonical, which they suspected were no more than so many interpolations of the revisers. The Persians, the Indians, the inhabitants of the coast of Coromandel, and the other followers of Ali, reject several verses as apocryphal, which the Turks receive as canonical; for which reason they have given them the name of Schittes; whereas the Turks, the inhabitants of Mogul, the Arabians, and the Africans, who follow the doctrine or comment of Abu-Beker, and look upon themselves as the only orthodox, take upon themselves the name of Sonnites. But abating this, all of them have so profound a veneration for this book, that it falls very short of idolatry. Some of them ever carry several verses, and sometimes whole chapters of it about them, as an infallible preservative against all the accidents of life; and their princes and great men enrich the cover of their Alcoran with pearls and diamonds.

TAVERNIER relates in his voyages*, that the great Mogul sent in his time a copy of it to Mecca, the cover of which was valued at twelve hundred thousand livres, and that there was in the middle of it a diamond, which alone weighed a hundred and three carats. Such is the veneration the infidels have for this book, though stuffed with fictions; so true is it, that falsehood, when dressed with an air of something marvellous, is very apt to allure the minds of men;

VOL. II.

C c.

same

same time that we neglect the reading of our holy books, the sacred depository of revealed truths, and wherein we meet, and that with much more certainty than in the Alcoran, an undoubted history of the first ages of the world, wise maxims for the conduct of this life, and infallible promises, and the most undoubted assurances with regard to eternity.

The End of the Discourse on the Alcoran, and Vol. II.

Cleaned & Oiled

September 1986

